

**AN EXPLORATION OF HOW SOME STAFF MEMBERS PERCEIVE  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL RENEWAL IN SOME PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN  
THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ROCKHAMPTON**

Submitted by

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## **Statement of Authorship and Sources**

I certify that the substance of this thesis is the original work of the author. It has not already been submitted for any degree, nor is it currently being submitted for any other degree.

I certify that assistance received in the preparation of this thesis, and all sources used, have been acknowledged.

All research procedures reported in this thesis received approval from the relevant Ethics Committee.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Abstract**

For the last forty years, since the end of the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church has been committed to renewal. In Queensland, Catholic schools have responded to this commitment by undertaking cyclical renewal processes since the early 1980s. The focus of this research was the process of Catholic School Renewal in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton, Queensland, Australia.

The review of the literature focused on literature relating to school effectiveness and school improvement internationally and nationally, as well as Catholic School Renewal in Queensland generally and the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton specifically.

The following research questions focused the research design:

1. How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a source of potential growth?
2. How does the process of Catholic School Renewal ensure quality Catholic education?
3. How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a useful quality assurance tool?

The epistemological stance adopted for the research was constructionism. The research paradigm adopted was interpretivism with social interactionism as the selected orientation. As case study is congruent with an interpretivist tradition of research it was adopted as a useful way of gaining insight into the perspectives of the participants.

The case was comprised of some staff members who worked in one of four Catholic primary schools situated in three of the four regions of the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton. Data collection took the form of semi-structured interviews and a survey questionnaire with the data being analysed using the constant comparative method.

The study concluded that the process of Catholic School Renewal in the Diocese of Rockhampton is a useful quality assurance tool which helps to ensure quality Catholic education. Whether or not the process is a source of growth is dependent on a number of factors, paramount among which is the approach and ability of the Regional Supervisor of Schools.

There were six major recommendations arising out of the research. These related to:

1. Ensuring the Regional Supervisor of Schools has certain attributes and knowledge.
2. Inservicing school staff on the purpose and nature of Catholic School Renewal.
3. Providing External Validation Team members with adequate inservice.
4. Permitting more involvement of the school principal in the process.
5. Initiating a review of the process of Catholic School Renewal in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton..
6. Rockhampton Catholic Education continuing to use the process.

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# Chapter One

## The Research Defined

### 1.1 Introduction to the Research

This thesis explores the process of Catholic School Renewal in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton. In the Rockhampton Diocese it is compulsory for all diocesan schools to undertake the process “as part of ensuring quality of Catholic education” (Davis, 1999a). The focus of this inquiry is the perceptions held by staff members of four Catholic primary schools in the diocese that undertook the examination phase of Catholic School Renewal in 1999.

This chapter provides an introduction to the thesis by considering some important areas. Initially, the research site is outlined, followed by the introduction to the research problem and the purpose of the research. The research questions, design of the research and the significance of the research follow. After an explanation of the limitations of the research, the chapter concludes with an outline of the structure of the thesis.

### 1.2 The Site of the Research

The focus of the research is an exploration of Catholic School Renewal (CSR) in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton from the perspectives of staff members of four of the primary school communities that undertook the examination phase of CSR between November 1998 and October 1999. A case study approach was selected with *the case* comprising four primary schools from three of the four regions of the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton.

Rockhampton Catholic Education is an agency of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Rockhampton, Queensland, Australia. The diocese extends from Bundaberg in the south to Mackay in the north and west to the Northern Territory border. The Pacific Ocean acts as a boundary along the eastern coastline.

Catholic Education is not an autonomous system, as it is accountable to Catholic Church leadership. Rockhampton Catholic Education is responsible for providing a wide range of educational services, most of which are directed towards the twenty-eight primary schools and eight secondary colleges for which it is responsible. There are also two religious institute

(Edmund Rice Education Services and Presentation Sisters) colleges in the diocese which, while not being responsible to Catholic Education, are considered as part of the diocesan “family” of schools, because they fall under the jurisdiction of the local bishop.

Catholic schools endeavour to be more than just educative institutions, with parents being recognised as the first and foremost educators of their children and welcomed into and encouraged to be involved in the school community (Hanifin, 1999). Catholic schools emphasise a commitment to an educational ministry that embraces and promotes lifelong learning; respects the richness of the past; seeks to meet the major challenges of the present and creates the potential for a better future (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1998). Organisational and administrative structures in Catholic schools “support the curriculum, give priority to people and develop healthy interpersonal relationships” (Conference of Catholic Education Queensland, 1986). The Rockhampton Diocese identifies its purpose in education as “inviting and challenging learners of all ages to be and become reflective and self-directed as we journey with Christ in our ever-changing world...honouring the past, enriching the present, shaping the future, finding meaning for life” (Stower, 2004).

In 2005 there were a total of 6,556 primary, 950 preschool and 74 preparatory children enrolled in 28 primary schools (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 2005a). The primary schools in the Rockhampton Diocese range in size from a 3-class school with an enrolment of 39, to a 25-class school with an enrolment of 635 (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 2005a). The primary schools are located throughout the diocese in the following geographical locations: Barcaldine, Biloela, Blackall, Bundaberg, Clermont, Emerald, Gladstone, Gracemere, Longreach, Mackay, Monto, Rockhampton, Sarina, Springsure, Tannum Sands, Walkerson, and Yeppoon.

Of the ten secondary colleges, eight provide for children in Years 8 to 12, one for Years 8 to 10 and one for Years 11 and 12. One is a religious institute (Edmund Rice Educational Services) boys’ boarding and day college; another is a religious institute (Presentation Sisters) girls’ boarding and day college; and another is a co-educational day college with boarding facilities for girls and residential facilities for boys. The colleges are located at Bundaberg, Gladstone, Rockhampton, Emerald and Mackay. The combined total number of secondary students in 2005 was 6,354 (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 2005a).

Catholic Education employs 1,863 school based staff (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 2005b) to cater for 12,933 preschool to Year 12 students attending diocesan schools. Of these staff members, 623 are primary school teachers and 555 are secondary school teachers; the other 685 are school officers and grounds staff. Edmund Rice Educational Services employ staff at St Brendan's College, Yeppoon and the Presentation Sisters employ staff at St Ursula's College, Yeppoon.

Funding for Diocesan Catholic schools is derived mainly from Commonwealth and State government grants which are responsible for providing approximately eighty percent of the necessary funds. Fees, levies and other school generated income sources account for the other twenty percent. The Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC) represents the five Queensland Catholic dioceses in negotiations with the State Government, while the National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) "is the focal point for ongoing discussions and negotiations with the Commonwealth Government and other national bodies involved in education" (NCEC, 1999, p. 3). As there are accountability procedures associated with both State and Commonwealth funding, it is necessary for "the system to keep abreast with current trends ... to meet political accountability measures. This must be done in a manner that concurs with the mission and vision of Catholic schooling" (Hanifin, 1999, p. 5).

The administrative structure adopted by Rockhampton Catholic Education to cater for the needs of the schools and for accountability comprises the Diocesan Director of Catholic Education and her Leadership Team. The Leadership Team comprises the Diocesan Director and eight Assistants to the Director – Finance, Curriculum, Administration and Religious Education & Faith Formation and four Assistants to the Director - Schools: Southern, Western, Rockhampton and Northern. The Assistants to the Director - Schools are all based in Rockhampton and have direct contact with the schools under their respective jurisdictions. The Assistant to the Director – Schools' role is to facilitate contact between the Diocesan Catholic Education Office (DCEO) and the individual schools and to supervise the group of schools:

- Assistant to the Director - Schools (Southern) – Eight primary schools and two secondary colleges;
- Assistant to the Director - Schools (Western) – Six primary schools and one secondary college;

- Assistant to the Director - Schools (Rockhampton) – Seven primary schools and two secondary colleges. The two religious institute colleges are in this region and the principals of the colleges can invite the Assistant to the Director - Schools into the colleges;
- Assistant to the Director - Schools (Northern) – Seven primary schools and three secondary colleges.

The role of the Assistants to the Director - Schools includes supervision of these schools, implementing a vision and reporting on a regular basis to the Director of Catholic Education (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1999). As part of the *functional duties*, the Assistant to the Director - Schools “shares a responsibility for the evaluation of a school’s outcomes through the implementation of the School Renewal Program, especially in the leadership of the validation team and the monitoring of each school development plan” (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1999).

Assistants to the Director will be referred to as Regional Supervisors of Schools in the body of this research to better reflect a more common international language. Given that the diocese is administratively divided into four regions, it was deemed appropriate, when selecting a case, to choose one school from each of the regions. There was also the option of selecting either primary schools or secondary colleges. The researcher chose primary schools.

Between November 1998 and October 1999 a number of primary schools had undertaken the *examination phase* of the Catholic School Renewal (CSR) process. However, no schools in the western region had done so. The researcher therefore elected to select one school in each of the southern and Rockhampton regions, and two from the northern region. The southern school had an enrolment of 275 children in nine primary classes and two preschool groups. The Rockhampton school had an enrolment of 190 children in eight primary classes and one preschool group. One of the northern schools had an enrolment of 411 children with fourteen primary classes and two preschool groups. The other northern school had an enrolment of 204 children in seven primary classes and one preschool group. Each of the schools is located in a different town, with a distance of 450 kilometres between the southernmost and the northernmost research site schools.

### **1.3 Identification of the Research Problem**

The first Catholic school in Australia was established when George Morley collaborated with Fr Therry to establish a school at Parramatta in 1820 (D’Orsa, 2001). The first Catholic school in Queensland commenced operations in 1845 when two lay teachers opened a primary school near the corner of Elizabeth and Albert Streets in Brisbane (Tobin, 1987). In 1869, the Australian Catholic Bishops made the courageous and far reaching decision to establish an alternative school system that would include a spiritual dimension – the dimension that the bishops claimed was missing from the free, secular and compulsory education offered by the various colonial governments of the day (Quillinan, 1997). The bishops argued that religious education should not be separated from education in secular subjects, as the secular and the sacred were inextricably linked and there could be no dichotomy between faith and knowledge (Collins, 1986, 1991). In the period before 1869 “there were ‘schools for Catholics’, but not systems of schools. In consequence, many schools existed for only short periods” (D’Orsa, 2001, p. 4).

“The Catholic schools that developed in the period 1870-1940 affirmed the right of the Church to be involved in education” (D’Orsa, 2001, p. 4). By the turn of the century, a loosely bound tripartite system of Catholic education was evident. The bishop exercised nominal authority over parish schools in the diocese, with the provincial of the religious congregation being responsible for educational and organizational matters, and the local parish priest providing buildings and support for living expenses. These schools were opened as a condemnation of the “rampant and aggressive secularism” (Collins, 1991, p. 107) of the public schools, while also consolidating the power of the local bishop (Griffiths & McLaughlin, 2000).

During the period that extended from the 1890s until the end of World War II, the Catholic education system grew across the nation. The schools were usually staffed by members of religious congregations who were loyal to their provincials but usually dependent on the local bishop or parish priest for their housing and livelihood (Griffiths, 1998).

As the educative agency of the Catholic Church, the schooling system had its roots firmly embedded in Irish culture (Quillinan, 1997; Watkins, 1997) until after the Second World War when, due to the huge increase in European immigration, the Church in Australia underwent profound changes:

During these post-war years the sectarian bias against Catholics began to break down. At the same time, many more secondary schools were established. The Catholic school became not only a pastoral instrument, but also increasingly enabled many Catholics to take their place in society. It helped them make the often harsh journey from poverty to modest prosperity (D'Orsa, 2001, p. 4).

The Church took on a multicultural flavour (Campion, 1987), which, when combined with the consequences of the Second Vatican Council, the increasing birth rate and the increase in the number of years that children remained at school (Griffiths & McLaughlin, 2000), changed the face of Catholic education in Australia. The Church came to view the role of the school in a new light; its role as a major resource in the evangelising mission of the church was confirmed (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988; Flannery, 1996a), resulting in a realisation that in order to be authentic, the Catholic school needed to embrace students from other cultures (Buetow, 1988). As a result of these changes, the Catholic “sacred-fortress mentality” (Treston, 1997, p. 16) was finally removed.

By the beginning of the 1970s, Catholic education authorities across Australia recognised the need to rebuild existing organisational structures to make best use of available resources. This led to the *Armidale Conference* in 1972 which laid the foundations for the establishment of National, State and Diocesan Catholic Education Offices (Chapter 2 has a more comprehensive examination of this period).

In recognition of the need for Catholic schools to have an accountability instrument, the Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland (CCEQ) issued a policy in October 1986 which made formal school renewal compulsory. However, the Rockhampton diocese had already initiated a process of school review in 1982 and therefore the result of the CCEQ policy was that the name of the Rockhampton process was changed from Cooperative School Evaluation (CSE) to Catholic School Renewal (CSR); it was essentially a change in name only. The Rockhampton model has always differed from the model proposed in 1986 as an external team is utilised in the Rockhampton model as part of the Renewal to validate the Internal Report; this was not a part of the 1986 proposed model.

The CSR model that is used in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton is a derivative of the CSE model which was introduced in 1982. Originally its main focus was as a response to the

changing face of Catholic schools in terms of staffing (fewer religious) and organisation and administration. The original rationale was that each Catholic school would:

... continually re-evaluate its own structures and processes and also its relationship with parents, community and Catholic education at large so that there was a consonance between the Christian values it espouses and its actual practice (McLay, 1979, p. 82).

When the process was first introduced, there was only one diocesan Supervisor of Schools whose role was to implement CSE at all schools. As time progressed, this person was joined in this task by the Diocesan Religious Education Coordinator.

As a result of the evolution of Rockhampton Catholic Education, there are now four Assistants to the Director – Schools, the contemporary title given to Regional Supervisors of Schools, each of whom is responsible for conducting the examination phase of the CSR process in schools in his/her respective region. External Validation Team (EVT) members are invited to be a part of the process. The Assistant to the Principal (RE) and School Board members are usually charged with the task of coordinating the internal examination and producing the Internal Report. At no stage are any of the participants, including the Assistants to the Director - Schools who lead the process, offered training in the process or in formulating or analysing surveys. The researcher has identified that no formal research has ever been conducted to examine the process of CSR in the Diocese of Rockhampton. This research seeks to redress that situation.

#### **1.4 Purpose of the Research**

The purpose of this study is to explore the previously unresearched area of Catholic School Renewal (CSR) in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton from the perspectives of staff members. The process is compulsory for all diocesan schools and colleges in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton, and as such impacts to various degrees on all those who are employed in the schools or have any formal connection with the schools.

Rockhampton Catholic Education has been conducting school review/evaluation processes in the diocese for more than twenty years, initially as a means of accountability, and more recently to:

- be a source of growth (Conference of Catholic Education Queensland, 1986; Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 2004); and

- to ensure the quality of Catholic education (Davis, 1999a; Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 2004).

While there have been a number of organisational, conceptual and name changes over the period of time, there has never been a structured review of the process involving all stakeholders. The results of this study will enable Rockhampton Catholic Education to better understand how staff members throughout the diocese perceive the renewal process.

## **1.5 The Research Issues**

In order to address the topic of this study three research questions are posed:

1. How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a source of potential growth?
2. How does the process of Catholic School Renewal ensure quality Catholic education?
3. How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a useful quality assurance tool?

The questions emerged from Rockhampton Catholic Education's policy *Quality Assurance of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Rockhampton*:

As part of ensuring the quality of Catholic education, each diocesan school will engage in a process of continuous School Renewal to ensure students have access to a quality education which is Catholic in nature and purpose. A school development plan to guide future growth and life is a significant feature of Catholic School Renewal (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1997, 2004).

### **1.5.1 Research Question 1: How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a source of potential growth?**

Implicit to the exploration is an investigation into whether or not participants believe the process to be a source of growth for themselves personally, spiritually or professionally. If it is accepted that "the process of renewal is ongoing" (Davis, 1999a, p. 9), it must also be accepted that it will have an influence on each staff member's life. It would be far more beneficial for an ongoing influence to be regarded as a source of "potential growth" (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1997, 2004) than otherwise.



### **1.5.2 Research Question 2: How does the process of Catholic School Renewal ensure quality of Catholic education?**

As this is stated in the policy (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1997, 2004) as the primary aim of the CSR process, an exploration of the process will gauge the opinions of the major stakeholders on the issue.

### **1.5.3 Research Question 3: How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a useful quality assurance tool?**

This question is directed at gathering data which can be fed back to Catholic Education as a guide to future decisions concerning the renewal process. The researcher will endeavour to gain insights into how staff members perceive the process in terms of the mechanics of it (for example, how long does it take, is it continuous or a series of events). The researcher will gather data relating to the degree of ownership and local input the staff perceive that they have into the process. Participants will be invited to comment on (a) the effect that they believe the examination phase of the process has on the school and, (b) more generally, how much credibility they attribute to the process.

## **1.6 Design of the Research**

The purpose of the research is to explore CSR in the Diocese of Rockhampton from the perspectives of staff members in a sample of diocesan primary schools. A three phase research design was developed to address the research questions presented earlier (Howe & Eisenhart, 1990).

As the purpose of the study is to explore a phenomenon from the particular personal perspectives of staff members, it was appropriate to employ elements of both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

The particular epistemological stance adopted for this research project is *constructionism* (Crotty, 1998), which means that humans do not find or discover knowledge, but rather they construct knowledge as they engage with the world they are interpreting (Crotty, 1998; Schwandt, 2000). Constructionism makes it clear that there is no true or valid interpretation, with the main goal of constructionism being deep understanding, not imitative behaviour

(Holloway, 1999). The theoretical framework of the research is underpinned by an interpretivist paradigm.

An interpretivist approach seeks to understand the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it, so that they can understand the meaning of social phenomena (Schwandt, 2000). By using an interpretivist approach, the researcher placed a priority on searching for, uncovering, interpreting and illuminating the meanings of what is being understood or being interpreted about CSR by staff members (Harney, 1997). Symbolic interactionism was selected as the favoured form of interpretivism because it directs the researcher to place primary importance on the social meanings people attach to the world around them and to adopt the perspectives of those being studied (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).

A case study approach was selected as the appropriate approach for this study because it is the examination of an instance in action (MacDonald & Walker, 1975); it “enables the researcher to gain a better understanding of the historical and social process that produced the problem” (Walmsley, 1994, p. 29); and it is a holistic description and analysis of a phenomenon occurring in a bounded context or social unit (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The phenomenon in this study is CSR which is bounded by the context of the experiences of staff members of the four Catholic primary schools which comprise the case.

### **1.6.1 Stage 1 Identification of Schools and Participants**

The purpose of the first phase of the research was to identify schools and possible participants for the case. This involved archival research and document analysis, followed by personal contact by the researcher with school principals, and subsequently issuing letters of invitation and explanation (Appendix 1) to identified possible participants.

### **1.6.2 Stage 2 Semi-structured Interviews**

The purpose of the second phase of the research design was to conduct semi-structured interviews with 28 participants. Table 1.1 gives a summary of interview participants:

**Table 1.1 Summary of Interview Participants**

<b>School</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Other Staff</b>	<b>Total</b>
St Mary's	5	1	6
St Finbar's	4	0	4
St Kevin's	4	3	7
St Michael's	8	3	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>28</b>

Interviews were conducted on a one-to-one basis with individual participants at their schools. Some interviews were audio-recorded while others were recorded by way of the researcher taking notes. This stage also included member checks (the researcher checking with the participants to ensure that his interpretations of the interview data were correct), discussion of the text and feedback from the participants.

### **1.6.3 Stage 3 Development of the Survey Questionnaire**

The data collected during Stage 2 provided the basis for the development of a context-specific survey questionnaire to be used in Stage 3. The intuitive-rational approach to instrument development was adopted for the development of the instrument scales (Fraser, 1986).

### **1.6.4 Stage 4 Administering the Survey Questionnaire**

The survey questionnaire was administered by the researcher, following group presentations at three of the schools. Individual presentations were given at the other school. Sixty-eight participants returned the survey questionnaire. The data collected - ten dependent measures and four independent measures - were statistically analysed using the SPSS package (SPSS Inc., 1997).

### **1.6.5 Stage 5 Results of the Survey Questionnaires**

Collected data and the results obtained from the analysis were fed back to the participants during specific school visits. Participants were invited and encouraged to make comments. These comments were recorded by the researcher and conclusions adjusted accordingly. A comprehensive account of the research design is presented in Chapter Four of this thesis.

## **1.7 Significance of the Research**

This study is significant as it seeks to gather data about CSR from the perspectives of some staff members who are currently working in a sample of Catholic primary schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton. The study “attempts to provide a view from reality” (Coughlan, 1998, p. 16), being the perspectives of 68 staff members of four primary schools, each of whom provides an insight into their understanding and experiences of CSR. This will offer possibilities for more informed professional practice in the area of CSR for both the researcher and the participants. The results of the study will raise institutional consciousness about some of the key considerations concerning the implementation of CSR in the Diocese of Rockhampton. As a result this has the capacity to inform future planning by the major stakeholders in Catholic education in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton to attempt to provide the most suitable educational and accountability structures to meet the demands of contemporary society. Critical to an understanding of the future of accountability processes in Catholic schools, is an understanding of the origins of the current structures and how they developed. It is therefore necessary for stakeholders to have an historical perspective, a contemporary perspective and an understanding of the possible future of the Catholic school and its accountability structures.

In a post-Vatican II climate, that is since 1965, Catholic school administrators are expected to manage their schools in an administrative style based on participative, consultative decision-making as advocated by the Second Vatican Council (Slattery, 1989). Yet these administrators are unable to imitate such practices because such are “conspicuously absent anywhere else in the church” (Leavey, 1984, p. 22). “Catholic school leaders are answerable to the multiple legitimacies of school community, parish priest, Catholic Education Office and the bishop” (Roche, 1997, p. 10). Unlike in days gone by, blind religious adherence is no longer sufficient in itself to explain parental choice of school in Australia (Partington, 1988). “Parent choice of school is in general influenced by the heightened expectations parents appear to have of schools” (Griffiths, 1998, p. 67). In the Rockhampton Diocese, accountability is undertaken formally by the practice of CSR. This study serves as an exploration of that process to gather some perceptions from those people who are working in schools.

The research on CSR and accountability structures adopted by Catholic schools is negligible, suggesting that a lacuna exists in this area of research. Furthermore, the research contributes to the general study of educational administration as well as to the more specific area of the

ongoing existence and development of Catholic schools. The findings of this study, whilst not necessarily applicable across wider contexts, raise questions pertinent to Catholic education generally. The pursuit of these questions will prove to be a useful step in the further development of Catholic school accountability processes. It is also hoped that the insights gained in this study will contribute to the scholarly knowledge concerning school renewal and restructuring.

## **1.8 Limitations of the Research**

The research reported in this thesis is concerned with exploring CSR in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton from the perspectives of staff members. Notwithstanding the comments on trustworthiness and consistency provided in Chapter Four, it is acknowledged that the study is limited in its scope as it focuses only on four Catholic primary schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton and the perspectives of 68 staff members who work in those schools at a particular point in time. Limiting the sample to staff members from four schools allows for information-rich cases to be explored (Merriam, 1998). However, because the case is intradiocesan, Rockhampton Catholic Education, when planning future developments in the area of CSR, may consider the findings. This in turn may lead to the findings being utilised by other school authorities.

It is acknowledged that it is the concern of this study to present findings that are specific to this case, and as a case study it is interested in the particular not the general. The research seeks its response in the readership.

## **1.9 Outline of the Thesis**

The thesis has seven chapters, the first of which is *The Research Defined* which introduces the thesis by describing the research site and outlining the problem, purpose and issues. Chapter Two is entitled *The Context: A Call to Renewal* and aims to contextualise the research problem by presenting significant phases in the history of Catholic education as they relate specifically to the CSR process being explored.

Chapter Three, *Review of the Literature*, provides an extensive review of the literature relating to the themes of school restructuring generally - internationally and nationally - as well as the more specifically Catholic area of CSR. The literature review provides a vehicle which can

initially be used to develop an understanding of the research problem, and later as a framework for a discussion of the findings.

*Design of the Research* is the fourth chapter which details the methodology adopted for the study. The research employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches and a constructionist (Crotty, 1998) epistemology. An interpretivist orientation was adopted with the research design utilising the principles of symbolic interactionism. The chapter documents procedural issues of the study, namely research participants, research methods, data analysis, and ethical considerations

Chapter Five is entitled *Analysis and Presentation of Data* and presents the results of the study in two parts. The first is the qualitative data gathered through the interview process. The second reports on the quantitative data gathered with the use of the survey questionnaire research instrument entitled *An exploration of the process of Catholic School Renewal in the Diocese of Rockhampton from the perspectives of staff members*.

Chapter Six is the *Discussion of Findings* and documents a discussion of the findings utilising Chapter Three as a framework for the discussion.

The final chapter in the thesis is *Conclusions and Recommendations*. This chapter summarises the study and identifies a number of common themes. It makes a number of recommendations for future research and for improved practice as well as highlighting implications for Catholic education generally.

In addition to the reference list, there are appendices providing documentation that the researcher considered to be useful as a means of supporting the main body of the thesis.

## Chapter Two

### The Context: A Call to Renewal

#### 2.1 Purpose of the Study

This study explores how Catholic School Renewal is perceived by some staff members in four primary schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton. Specifically, the problem is explored from the personal perspectives of staff members from a selection of those school communities that undertook the examination phase of the Catholic School Renewal process.

#### 2.2 Introduction

This chapter presents a chronology of significant phases in the history of Catholic education as it relates specifically to the CSR process which is currently being used in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton.

Significant events which have impacted on CSR in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton include:

1962-65	The Second Vatican Council
1972	The First Australian National Catholic Education Conference
1973	Formation of the Australian Schools Commission and associated financial ramifications
1979	Project Catholic “School”
1981	Appointment of Supervisor of Schools (Rockhampton Diocese)
1982	Cooperative School Evaluation - Primary Schools
1982	Publication of <i>A Tree by the Waterside: A Practical Guide for Building Community in Catholic Education</i>
1982-87	School Level Evaluation
1986	Queensland Policy Statement - <i>Self Renewing Catholic Schools</i>
1987	Catholic School Renewal (Rockhampton Diocese) - Primary Schools
1989	Rockhampton Policy Statement (Initial) - <i>Self Renewing Catholic Schools</i>
1990	Catholic School Renewal (Rockhampton Diocese) - Secondary Schools
1995-97	Rockhampton Policy Statement (Various Drafts of Revision Number 2) - <i>Quality Assurance of Catholic Schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton</i>
1997	Rockhampton Policy Statement (Revision Number 2) – <i>Quality Assurance of Catholic Schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton</i>
2000	Publication of <i>Catholic School Renewal: A Quality Assurance Program for Catholic Schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton</i>
2003	Queensland Policy Statement – <i>Catholic School Renewal in Queensland</i>

2004	Rockhampton Policy Statement – <i>Quality Assurance of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Rockhampton</i>
2004	Rockhampton Diocesan <i>Learning Framework</i>

## **2.3 Pre-Renewal**

If the reader is to gain an understanding of the contemporary concept and practicalities of CSR as it is applied in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton, it is necessary that significant events of the past be examined. The events listed above will be presented for the reader to gain a greater insight into CSR in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton.

### **2.3.1 The Effects of the Second Vatican Council**

As has been the case with the world of commerce, business and secular education, Catholic education, as the educational arm of the Catholic Church, has undergone many changes since the early 1960s (Spry, 1995). On January 25, 1959, Pope John Paul XXIII explored the notion of the Second Vatican Council. This was further developed in his convocation of the Council *Humanae Salutis* on December 25, 1961. The Council became known as the Council of Renewal with its main focus being *aggiornamento* (bringing up to date). The spirit of renewal was to espouse not just the need to renew, but also the essence of what it is to be an authentic Christian (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1992). The other focus was “*ressourcement*, a return to the sources of Christianity in the teachings of Jesus” (Noone, 2002, p. 1).

The Second Vatican Council was held in Rome from 1962 to 1965. This event has been heralded as the most significant recent appraisal of the Catholic Church’s role and function (Griffiths, 1998), and one of the great watershed events in the history of the Catholic Church. The Church that emerged from the Council was very different from the Church that entered it. The “new” church looked to abandon the practices of triumphalism, legalism and clericalism in favour of a more open, participatory approach which was mindful of the fundamental equality of all (Marinelli, 1993). In the decade or so that followed the Council there were signs of the emergence of a more liberal, participative and cooperative model of Church both in Australia and elsewhere (Collins, 1986). The Church attempted to develop an enhanced sense of community and more horizontal, collegial structures of authority (Garvin, Godfrey & McDonnell, 1994).



The Church no longer viewed itself as a self contained spiritual empire (Lavery, 2003), but recognised “itself as something relatively small in the midst of the world’s joys and griefs; a leaven, a lantern, a mustard seed, a pilgrim people, a servant” (Honner, 2000, p. 3). Vatican II emphasized ecumenism and brought with it a renewed commitment to service and communal ecclesiology (Groome, 1998; Ludwig, 1995).

During the course of the Council, *The Declaration on Christian Education* (Flannery, 1996a) was written as a summary of the Council’s deliberations on Catholic education. The main focus of the document was schooling, emphasising that education is concerned with developing the whole person in the context of his or her society. It also states that it is important for Catholic education to keep abreast of advances in the sciences (McBrien, 1994). *The Declaration on Catholic Education* (Flannery, 1996a) was not a particularly democratic or radical document. It was left to later official church documents (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977, 1982, 1988, 1998) to emphasize the promotion of relationships, community climate, common culture, collaborative decision making, shared vision and conflict resolution as an elaboration of the Church’s view of Catholic schooling in the post Vatican II twentieth century.

The Congregation for Catholic Education (1977, 1982, 1988, 1998) offers an increasingly liberal, social democratic perspective of Catholic education where all members of the Catholic school community enjoy certain political rights. Political participation is open to all, but democracy and collaboration were not recommended in these documents. While the participation of stakeholders was being encouraged, no attempt was made to describe how the power-less could effectively participate, nor how the marginalised could be represented and resourced (Spry, 1995). However, Catholic education authorities in Australia were beginning to acknowledge that there may be a better way of organising themselves.

### **2.3.2 The Move to Centralisation**

By the beginning of the 1970s, Catholic education authorities across Australia recognised the need to rebuild existing organisational structures to make best use of available resources (Griffiths & McLaughlin, 2000). “The existing organisational structure was at best outdated, at worst defunct” (Griffiths, 1998, p. 29). Much of the Catholic debate in the early 1970s centred around the appropriate level of centralisation or decentralisation (Griffiths, 1998). Catholic education authorities were therefore looking towards more fully developed central services, to

replace the non-centralised systems that were in place (Bourke, 1975). To this end, the first Australian National Catholic Education Conference was held in Armidale, New South Wales in 1972. The purpose of the conference was to look at possible administrative structures for the future. From the conference there emerged a generally accepted view that a more centralised administration system was required. Following the conference, a committee was established to make recommendations on the future organisational structure of Catholic Education in Australia.

The Committee recommended a four-tiered administrative structure consisting of:

- the local school;
- the diocese - Catholic Education Office;
- the state - Catholic Education Commission; and
- the nation - National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC).

The Committee went on to state that:

Individual schools should involve parents, teachers and pupils. The diocesan structure, and the Education Office that carries out the policies of the diocesan body, should provide service and care for all the schools in the diocese, even though the relationship of the Office to the various schools may not be identical. State and national bodies would coordinate and provide services of a more generalized kind to the smaller local and diocesan units. The committee accepts the principle of devolution of authority, and sees the wider bodies as providing necessary centralised services rather than control ... the committee believes that a characteristic of Catholic education that must be preserved is its emphasis upon localism and decentralisation of governance (Bishops' Committee for Education, 1973, n.2.9, 2.10).

After being elected to government in 1972, one of the first administrative acts undertaken by the Whitlam Labor Government was to establish the Interim Australian Schools Commission. This was followed by a dramatic increase in the amount of government funds made available to Catholic schools for recurrent and capital purposes. However, because of the numbers involved, the government refused to deal directly with individual schools, instead opting to deliver funds as block grants to Catholic Education Commissions "which would be responsible at law for ensuring that they were used for the purposes intended" (Australian Schools Commission, 1973, p. 136).

Some of the positive effects associated with the move towards central governance included a dramatic increase in financial security which resulted in increased resources, reduced class sizes and improved capital assistance. Some negative outcomes included (a) a shift in leadership priorities from a focus on students and individual schools to a type of systems maintenance that frequently absorbed the drive and enthusiasm of leaders and kept them distanced from schools and their educational needs, and (b) professionals who lacked an understanding of the purpose of Catholic education and therefore allowed government priorities to significantly shape and structure values and culture of the system (Canavan, 1991, 1992).

It is evident that there was a very real need, indeed eventually a government requirement, that Catholic school systems form themselves into a structure with some central administration. The benefits of doing so are evident in terms of the improvements to the system since 1972. However, central authorities need to continually monitor their operations to ensure that they are providing a servant leadership model as advocated in the Vatican documents. Catholic Education Offices need to guard against being seen as undemocratic and “above” the system (Canavan, 1991, 1992). In 1976, the Catholic authorities in Queensland undertook their first major project in an attempt to address any tendency towards bureaucratisation.

### **2.3.3 Project Catholic “School”**

Prior to the 1970s, Catholic education systems had operated according to a patriarchal model of administration (McLay, 1979). The parish priest controlled the parish primary school. The school was staffed by religious sisters. The religious sisters were reliant on the parish priest to pay the accounts and make many of the decisions.

During the 1970s, dramatic changes occurred within Catholic education. The Australian Schools Commission, set up by the Whitlam Labor Government, assumed an active role in providing Catholic education. Following the Armidale Conference in 1972, diocesan, state and national Catholic Education Offices and Commissions were developed, thus centralising finances within Diocesan Education Offices. Due to a decline in the number of religious, staff members were being replaced with members of the laity. These factors led to the evolution of a bureaucratic model of administration.

In 1976, Queensland Catholic Education authorities commissioned a research project to:

... devise an administrative model (or models) capable of adoption by Catholic Education authorities to meet the future needs of Catholic schools. These models relate to structures at all levels - local, regional, state (McLay, 1979, p. 1).

“The study was imagined to be a *by-pass operation* by which the threat of a transition to a highly bureaucratic model of administrative structure would be avoided in favour of a model which would be in harmony with a broad vision of Catholic education” (Spry, 1995, pp. 125-126.). The research, which became known as *Project Catholic “School”*, was undertaken between 1977 and 1979 under the leadership of Director of Research Sister Anne McLay, assisted by Sister Denise Coghlan, Mr Paul Corkeron and Mr Alan Druery, with Associate Professor A. Ross Thomas from the University of New England acting in a consultancy role.

The research project consisted of two phases. The first phase drew on the opinions of people concerned with Catholic education and sought to identify the ideal Catholic school of the future by way of a series of questionnaires and public meetings. The second phase consisted of interviews, surveys, public submissions, analysis of documents and visits to Catholic systems nationally and internationally. The purpose of this phase was to gather data that, after analysis, resulted in *Project Catholic “School”* (McLay, 1979) being published.

*Project Catholic “School”* presented seventy-seven recommendations, *A Profile of the Catholic School of the Future*, and the principles of organisation that should underpin structures and practices in Catholic education. The profile suggested that the ideal Catholic school of the future would be referred to in terms of:

- Faith Education;
- Community Orientation;
- Personal Development of Students;
- Intellectual Goals;
- Administrative Structures and Procedures; and
- Self-renewal

*Project Catholic “School”* also clarified two far-sighted positions, these being, “(a) that the Catholic school should be marked by its commitment to shared decision making and (b) that it be characterised by its capacity to self renew” (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1992).

The community model, characterised by the principles of ministry, collegiality and subsidiarity was advanced as a replacement for the prevailing outdated patriarchal model.

*Project Catholic "School"* precipitated the movement to a pastoral approach for school boards and introduced processes for self-evaluation within schools (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1992).

#### **2.3.4 Cooperative School Evaluation**

Following the publication of *Project Catholic "School"*, the Director of Catholic Education for Brisbane and Queensland, Father Bernard O'Shea, recognised the changing face of Catholic schools in terms of staffing as well as organisation and administration. There were fewer people entering religious life and therefore schools were relying more on the laity to staff them. In 1980, on Father O'Shea's advice, Rockhampton Catholic Education advertised a newly created position of *Supervisor of Catholic Schools for the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton*. The role of the supervisor, who was to commence duties in 1981, was to be one of ensuring accountability, specifically to implement a process for Catholic school evaluation.

The appointed supervisor was Mr. Joe McCorley who had previously worked with the Queensland Department of Education as an Inspector of Schools. McCorley initiated and implemented a process that was called *Cooperative School Evaluation (CSE)*. The process involved the supervisor working with all the primary schools in the diocese to ensure accountability to parents, parish, parish priest and, because of funding arrangements, government. When the process was first implemented, the supervisor worked solely with the principal of each school. Later, the process developed to the point where the general approach was as follows:

The supervisor heard every child in the school read; looked at samples of writing; and worked with all children in mathematics. The Diocesan Religious Education Coordinator, Sister Beryl Amadee, worked with the children in Religious Education. An open parent meeting was held, where parents were asked to state what they perceived the school to be doing well/not doing well. At the end of the process, the supervisor presented the school with a report which listed what was being achieved and what needed to be developed (McCorley, 1999a).

The rationale for CSE was that each Catholic school would:

... continually re-evaluate its own structures and processes and also its relationship with parents, community and Catholic education at large so that there was a consonance between the Christian values it espouses and its actual practice (McLay, 1979, p. 82).

The implementation of CSE led to the Rockhampton Diocese being selected as a trial diocese for School Level Evaluation.

### **2.3.5 School Level Evaluation**

When *Project Catholic "School"* articulated its vision of "The Ideal Catholic School", a strong emphasis was placed on its ability to self renew. The report also stated that:

The Catholic school of the future will continually re-evaluate its own structures and processes, and also its relationships with parents, the community and Catholic Education at large (McLay, 1979, p. 82).

At about the same time, the Commonwealth Schools Commission was advocating the introduction of a school improvement program aimed at facilitating the devolution of decision-making to the local educational community (Spry, 1995).

As a result, the Queensland Catholic Education authorities utilised funding from the Commonwealth Schools Commission to fund the implementation of the School Level Evaluation (SLE) program, with the aim of institutionalizing continuous renewal at the local level. The SLE project was seen as an appropriate response to the recommendations of *Project Catholic "School"*, and the emerging needs of schools and schooling in Queensland at the time (Hewitson, 1983). The basic aims of the introductory workshop series of the SLE Project were:

- to introduce participants to recent developments in school initiated evaluation in Australia and particularly in Catholic schools in Queensland;
- to provide opportunity for participants to acquire some knowledge and skill in using some processes of evaluation/improvement;
- to motivate school teams towards commencing an evaluation/improvement exercise; and
- to develop ongoing support systems for those who commenced an evaluation/improvement exercise as a result of this workshop (Sharpley & Everett, 1983).

SLE was a voluntary process that was initiated, controlled and conducted from within the school. The strengths of the program were that participants acquired a greater understanding of evaluation-based school improvement, acquired skills in systemic change processes, and made an ongoing commitment to school improvement exercises. Hewitson identified the following as weaknesses: the involvement of the principal, maintaining the voluntary concept and the provision of consultancy support and evaluation instruments in each of the dioceses (Hewitson, 1983). Hewitson's generally favourable report in 1983 extended the life of the project until 1987.

Participants from the Rockhampton diocese who were interviewed by this researcher about their experiences of SLE stressed that while there were benefits to schools that were involved in the process, it was a process developed for individual schools. It did not involve an external team and did not replace the process that had been referred to as Cooperative School Evaluation (CSE), and later became known as Catholic School Renewal (CSR).

Another self-help program that was developed for Catholic schools was *A Tree by the Waterside*.

### ***2.3.6 A Tree by the Waterside: A Practical Guide for Building Community in Catholic Education***

In May 1980, the Second Australian National Catholic Education Conference was held in Canberra. The major issues to emerge from this conference were the identity of the Catholic school and the ministry of the Catholic school teacher. These same issues had been identified in the publication *Project Catholic "School"* in 1979. In 1982 two of the researchers involved in *Project Catholic "School"*, Sister Anne McLay and Mr Alan Drury, joined with Sister Francene Shaw and Ms Molly Murphy, to publish *A Tree by the Waterside: A Practical Guide for Building Community in Catholic Education* (McLay, Drury, Murphy & Shaw, 1982). The book was:

An attempt to identify new structures and to search out ways of proceeding within our school communities so that our flourishing tree of Catholic education in Australia will keep on bearing fruit that will last (McLay et al., 1982, p. vii).

It was a voluntary self-help study program and the editors suggested that the following groups or individuals might use it:

- school staffs, especially teachers newly inducted to Catholic schools;
- Parents and Friends' Associations;
- parents working with young people attending state schools;
- interested members of the local parish;
- parish catechists and Religious Education Coordinators;
- Parish Council members;
- members of Diocesan and State Education Councils and Commissions;
- clergy/seminarians;
- student teachers and senior secondary students;
- people interested in knowing about Catholic education; and
- other school systems (McLay et al., 1982, p. viii).

The program was organised in two parts:

PART 1 is reflective, and is essential for development of an understanding of the Church's educational mission, and the place of Catholic schools within that mission in this country.

PART 2 provides an outline for local action that can be taken to revitalise this mission in the local community. Five plans for action are suggested (McLay et al., 1982).

Part 1 involved looking at *Project Catholic "School"* (McLay, 1979), in particular the profile of "The Ideal Catholic School" and the principles of organisation, with a view to describing the cultural identity of the Catholic school. Part 2 was aimed at developing local action that could be undertaken to enact the cultural identity.

As time went by, the benefits of programs such as those listed in this section (2.3) became apparent to the employing authorities. This led to the beginning of negotiations aimed at introducing a state-wide approach to school evaluation.

#### **2.4 Queensland Policy Statement: Self-Renewing Catholic Schools in Queensland**

In October 1986, the Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland (CCEQ) issued a policy statement entitled *Self-Renewing Catholic Schools in Queensland* (Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland, 1986). The policy was the result of a number of factors.

One of the factors was that the Queensland State Government was beginning to talk about registration and possible inspection of non-government schools. This process could be used as



an accountability instrument. Another factor was in response to developments in school evaluation occurring at different rates and along different lines across the dioceses. SLE projects were being conducted at this time but, because the focus of these projects was on school level initiation and control, they were independent of the centrally controlled evaluations. For instance, the Supervisor of Catholic Schools in the Rockhampton diocese had been conducting CSE since 1981. At the same time, the Brisbane archdiocese had employed Regional Educational Officers who, as part of their roles, were to act in a supervisory capacity.

During regular inter-diocesan meetings, it became evident that different models of evaluation were evolving across the state. Most notably for the purposes of this work, was the emerging conceptual difference between what the Rockhampton diocese and the Brisbane archdiocese perceived to be a good and worthwhile model of CSR. The personnel from the Brisbane Catholic Education Office were of the view that renewal should be a natural, non-rational, qualitative process supported by the Regional Education Officer. The Rockhampton view was that it needed to be formal, structured and quantitative with an external team providing a view and feedback (Spry, 1995). At the beginning of 1985, an inter-diocesan working party was formed to draft a state-wide policy.

A draft of the policy was circulated in April, 1985, and another a little later. It soon became evident that there was a major difference of opinion between the Brisbane Catholic Education Office and the four regional diocesan Catholic Education Offices of Queensland as to what constituted Catholic School Renewal. In response to this, a new taskforce was established whose brief was to recommence the process of drafting a state-wide policy.

Finally, in October 1986, the (*compromise*) policy (Spry, 1995) was issued. Unlike any of the processes and projects of the past, the policy statement made formal renewal compulsory:

All Catholic schools in Queensland will engage in self-renewing processes which reflect Gospel values and focus on distinctive characteristics of a Catholic school (Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland, 1986).

The policy is closely linked to Project Catholic “School” (McLay, 1979) as it states that:

The Catholic school will continually re-evaluate its own performance, structures and processes, its relationship with parents and its community, as well as Catholic education

at large, so that there is a consonance between the Christian values it espouses and its actual practice (Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland, 1986).

The Queensland policy statement instructed that the process is (i) to involve the total school community; (ii) provide quality Catholic education; and (iii) be accountable (Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland, 1986). It will focus on the cultural characteristics of the Catholic school identified by Project Catholic “School”:

- Community of Faith;
- Religious Atmosphere;
- Relationships;
- Developmental Goals;
- Parental Involvement; and
- Organisation and Administration (Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland, 1986).

Self-renewal, underpinned by these cultural characteristics, was to take place in a “systematic and planned way by members of the school community” (Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland, 1986) by engaging in the six cyclical processes of:

- i) Initiation;
- ii) Reflection;
- iii) Examination;
- iv) Clarification;
- v) Action; and
- vi) Review (Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland, 1986).

The policy statement concludes with “Catholic schools will be distinctive by their ability to self-renew. They embrace in a spirit of hope, courage and love, and as a source of potential growth” (Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland, 1986).

Each of the five Queensland dioceses endorsed the policy and accepted the responsibility to implement it.

## **2.5 The Local Rockhampton Context**

The Queensland policy was earlier referred to as a compromise. This is because the Brisbane archdiocese was adamant about maintaining the “self-renewing” aspect of CSR. The

Rockhampton personnel continually argued against the concept. It is therefore clear that in accepting the Queensland policy statement, the Rockhampton Catholic Education personnel were endorsing the policy in principle, with the caveat that schools in the Rockhampton diocese would not be “self-renewing”. The practical implication of this was that the implementation of the policy would take the form of a review of the CSE process, not the adoption of a new process. The focus of CSE and, later, CSR in the Rockhampton Diocese has always been the curriculum in its broadest sense with an emphasis on teaching and learning (McCorley, 2000).

### **2.5.1 Catholic School Renewal in the Rockhampton Diocese**

In response to the CCEQ Self Renewing Catholic Schools in Queensland policy, the Rockhampton Diocese took a number of steps. These involved accepting the policy, initiating a review of CSE and changing its name to CSR. Also involved was an acceptance both of the five year cyclical process and of the cultural characteristics although “Developmental Goals” came to be known as “Curriculum Outcomes”, and “Religious Atmosphere” as “Religious Education”.

In order to maintain the unique diocesan element of CSE, Rockhampton Catholic Education decided to maintain the inclusion of an external validation panel of educators whose task is to validate the findings of the school community and to add its own commendations and recommendations for future growth (Doherty, 1992). When McCorley was employed in 1981, he introduced CSE with the underlying philosophy that it is necessary to invite people external to the situation to be involved in its evaluation as they are able to see “blind spots” that those involved cannot see (McCorley, 2000).

Doherty (1992) reports that the addition of the External Validation Team (EVT) was negotiated with diocesan principals at a Diocesan Principals’ Conference and received their support. He added that the purpose of this structural elaboration (Archer, 1984) was associated with:

- i) greater accountability;
- ii) perceived need to validate the findings of the school community by a panel with broad educational experience which would give increased credibility to the report; and
- iii) the desire to provide an additional dimension to the process; and the need to

prevent the feeling that the school may overlook some areas of strength or weakness because of prolonged exposure to it or lack of familiarity with alternatives (Doherty, 1992, p. 3).

Doherty concluded:

Our vision for School Renewal is seen as purposeful and constructive intervention of the CEO (Catholic Education Office) in the formal Renewal process – a process enriched by focussing on the school’s cultural characteristics and using the five (not six) cyclical stages to affirm and provide direction for the school community. Its great strength is the credibility which the final process possesses because of the validation of the school’s self renewal by the visiting panel of educators (Doherty, 1992, p. 18).

### **2.5.2 The Implementation of Catholic School Renewal in the Rockhampton Diocese**

The process that was adopted by Rockhampton Catholic Education maintained the use of the six stages identified in the State Policy (Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland, 1986).

When the process was introduced to the diocese in 1987, the stages were described as follows:

**Initiation:** The school community is informed of the School Renewal process, its background and intention. This is achieved by way of presentations at staff meetings, Mass, Information Nights and via newsletters.

**Reflection:** All members of the school community are invited to reflect on the purpose of the Catholic school, Mission Statement, Policies etc. This is done via the newsletter, staff meetings and parent meetings. The result of this stage is that some of the documents may need to be changed or revised.

**Examination:** All groups in the school are to evaluate how they carry out the ideals of the documents. A coordinating committee is formed to ensure that all groups within the school are able to be involved. Surveys, questionnaires and interviews are conducted. All of the data is collated and compiled as a School Report that is validated by the external team. The external team writes and presents a report.

**Clarification:** The school community prioritizes the recommendations.

**Action:** Various groups within the school community collaborate to formulate a School Development Plan.

**Review:** The School Development Plan is reviewed annually by staff, School Board and Parents and Friends Association (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1992, p. 23).

In 1987, only primary schools were involved in the CSR process. The religious orders maintained a presence in the secondary colleges for longer than they did in the primary schools. As a result, Catholic Education saw a greater need for system level involvement in the primary

schools than the secondary colleges. The first diocesan college to undertake the process was Mercy College, Mackay in 1990.

In May 1991, a schedule of schools to undergo CSR was generated by Catholic Education. This schedule included secondary colleges, with Shalom College in Bundaberg being the first secondary college to undertake the process as directed by Catholic Education (Doherty, 1992).

The visiting panel of educators (Doherty, 1992, p. 18) was unique to the Rockhampton Diocese and was referred to as the External Validation Team (EVT).

### **2.5.3 The External Validation Team**

As the External Validation Team (EVT) is the main structural elaboration (Archer, 1984) of the Rockhampton process, it deserves special mention. The composition of the EVT is negotiated between the principal and the Regional Supervisor of Schools. The latter makes recommendations to the Diocesan Director for final approval. Factors to be considered when considering team members are:

- understanding of the ethos of the Catholic school;
- expertise in curriculum, organisation and management;
- leadership in their particular fields; and
- some sensitivity to gender balance (Doherty, 1992; Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1992).

Costs incurred by the EVT have always been met by Catholic Education in the case of primary school renewals. The individual colleges have met their own costs until 2003 when Catholic Education took responsibility for costs as it had become evident that some colleges were selecting team members on financial grounds. The original dichotomy had existed because of the funding arrangements in existence in the Rockhampton diocese.

The major role of the EVT is to validate the Internal Report with which members have been presented. This is done by way of interviews, class visits, observations, discussion groups, forums, meetings and teaching. At the end of the process and school visit, the EVT provides the

school community with a verbal and written report which, along with the Internal Report, constitutes the School Renewal Report (Davis, 1999a).

#### **2.5.4 Rockhampton Diocese Policy Statements**

It took the Rockhampton Diocese three years from the launch of the State Policy to issue its own policy, entitled *Self Renewing Catholic Schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton* (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1989). An interesting feature of the Rockhampton policy statement is that it includes an area entitled *Issue Being Addressed*, which is “Accountability of schools to the Catholic community and the Diocesan Director” (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1989). This is a different approach to the State Policy which states its purpose as that espoused by Project Catholic “School” that:

The Catholic school will continually re-evaluate its own performance, structures and processes, its relationships with parents and its community, as well as Catholic education at large, so that there is a consonance between the Christian values it espouses and its actual practice (Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland, 1986).

The 1989 Rockhampton policy left no uncertainty about the purpose of renewal in the Rockhampton diocese. It was clearly for accountability. The policy states:

All schools responsible to the Diocesan Director of Catholic Education will engage in self-renewing processes which reflect Gospel values and focus on the distinctive characteristics of a Catholic school.

The decision to initiate the process of self renewal is made by the school community or by the Diocesan Director, or by some combination of these agents acting together (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1989).

“Self-renewing” is listed twice in the policy statement, as well as in the title and in the consequences. However, as has been discussed, neither the philosophy nor the practice at the time was one of self-renewing, but one of renewal with the added element of the involvement of an external team to validate the data gathered at the school. This is in consonance with the belief that an external team is needed to identify issues that those who are close to the situation may not recognise (McCorley, 2000).

The policy lists only five of the accepted six stages, failing to list the first stage of initiation. This is because initiation is included as a part of the actual policy, “The decision to initiate the

process is made by the school, community or by the Diocesan Director or by some combination of these agents acting together” (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1989).

The 1989 policy and the 1992 *Catholic School Renewal* handbook were both replaced in 1995. The policy was presented in draft form and undertook a number of refinements before being finally approved by the Diocesan Education Council on March 21, 1997. The policy was renamed *Quality Assurance of Catholic Schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton*:

As part of ensuring quality of Catholic education, each diocesan school will engage in a process of continuous School Renewal to ensure students have access to quality education which is Catholic in nature and purpose. A school development plan to guide future growth and life is a significant feature of Catholic School Renewal (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1995b).

The policy no longer made reference to the self-renewing aspect of the process; it also focused on the development of a School Development Plan, which is considered to be the major consequence of the examination phase of CSR.

Until the beginning of 2000, school leaders in the Rockhampton Diocese used *Catholic School Renewal: A Quality Assurance Program for Catholic Schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton – Draft 3* (June, 1995) (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1995b) as the handbook to guide them in matters associated with CSR in the diocese. The document includes a copy of the policy and consequences and a statement describing what CSR is:

Celebrates and affirms the good things going on in a school and brings about change thought to be worthwhile and necessary by the school and its community: Bringing the real and the ideal closer together and exploring the gaps (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1995b, p. 2).

The Cultural Characteristics of a Catholic School are listed as:

- Community of Faith;
- Religious Education;
- Relationships;
- Curriculum Outcomes;
- Parental Involvement; and
- Organisation/Administration (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1995b).

A section headed *How Do We Do It?* is included. The information in this section is mainly devoted to the “Evaluation Process” (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1995a; 1995b) and is similar to the corresponding information in an earlier document (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1992). The final section is entitled *External Visiting Team* and is similar to the same section in the 1992 document except for some subtle changes. One change worth noting is that the 1992 *Requirement for the External Visiting Team, Number 5 Access to Teachers work plans* (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1992) does not appear in the 1995 document (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1995a, 1995b).

While it is true that all members of the Rockhampton diocese network of schools and Catholic Education have access to the same documentation, there is a perception that the interpretation of the document varies quite dramatically. In March 2000, a revised document entitled *Catholic School Renewal: A Quality Assurance Program for Catholic Schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton* (Davis, 1999a) was launched at the Diocesan Principals’ Conference held in Mackay.

With reference to the 1999 document, it is important to note that the document was written by the Assistant to the Director - Curriculum with input by the Diocesan Leadership Team which, at the time, was comprised of the Director, three Assistants to the Director and four Regional Supervisors of Schools. The brief was to document existing practice not to review the process. A group of principals from the Rockhampton Region was involved in reviewing and drafting questionnaires. No principals or other stakeholders were involved in the process of writing the document.

## **2.6 Summary**

The purpose of this chapter has been to present a chronology of significant phases in the history of Catholic education as it relates specifically to the CSR process which is currently being used in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton. The chapter began with a list of significant events; these were expanded on through the course of the chapter.

The Second Vatican Council was a great watershed event in the history of the Catholic Church (Hellwig, 1992) as it discarded many of the traditional practices including triumphalism, legalism and clericalism, replacing them with a more equitable approach (Marinelli, 1993).



As a result of three uninterrupted days of debate towards the end of the Second Vatican Council, *The Declaration on Christian Education* (Flannery, 1996a) was published. It “clearly honours personal freedom as well as placing an emphasis on the community role of the school” (McLaughlin, 1999b). *The Declaration* implies that Catholic schools cannot use “yesterday’s responses and practices for today’s and tomorrow’s challenges” (McLaughlin, 1999b), and that “the Church must be seen to respond realistically to the question of changing cultures” (McLaughlin, 1999b).

In Australia, the need to make best use of available resources was identified. This resulted in the investigation of possible administrative structures for the future. In 1972, the first Australian National Catholic Education Conference was held in Armidale, New South Wales to look at this issue. The result of the conference was a four-tiered administrative structure which consisted of the local school, the Diocesan Catholic Education Office, the State Catholic Education Commission and the National Catholic Education Commission.

One of the results of the Whitlam Labor Government’s election to office in 1972 was a dramatic increase in the amount of government funds made available to Catholic schools. However, the government refused to deal directly with individual schools, opting to pay grants to Catholic Education Commissions instead. As the role of the Commission in Queensland grew, it became evident that an administrative model needed to be developed to meet the future needs of the schools (McLay, 1979).

This resulted in the commissioning of a research project that became known as *Project Catholic “School”*. For the purposes of this chapter, the project clarified two far-sighted positions, these being “(i) that the Catholic school should be marked by its commitment to shared decision making and (ii) that it be characterised by its capacity to self-renew” (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1992). In effect, *Project Catholic “School”* precipitated the movement to a pastoral approach for School Boards and introduced processes for self evaluation within schools (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1992).

In 1981, the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton appointed its first Supervisor of Schools. The role of the supervisor was to implement a process for Catholic school evaluation. The process was called Cooperative School Evaluation (CSE) and involved the Supervisor of Schools and

the Diocesan Religious Education Coordinator working with all children in a school, holding an open parent meeting and writing and presenting a report (McCorley, 1999a). The main purpose of this approach was accountability to parents, system and governments (McCorley, 2000).

In the ensuing years, *School Level Evaluation* was funded by the Commonwealth Schools Commission in response to *Project Catholic "School"*. It was a voluntary process intended to lead to school improvement. While *School Level Evaluation* was embraced by some schools in the Rockhampton Diocese, it did not replace CSE.

Another response to *Project Catholic "School"* was a publication entitled *A Tree by the Waterside: A Practical Guide to Building Community in Catholic Education* (McLay et al., 1982). This was a voluntary self-help program which was undertaken by some members of some school communities. Again, this did not have an impact on the CSE process.

In October 1986, after much debate and compromise, the Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland issued a policy statement entitled *Self Renewing Catholic Schools in Queensland* (Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland, 1986). While the policy statement clearly articulated a commitment to self-renewal, the Rockhampton diocese endorsed the policy with the caveat that schools in the Rockhampton diocese would not be "self-renewing". The Rockhampton diocese changed the name of its process to Catholic School Renewal (CSR), and generally accepted the five-year cycle and the cultural characteristics. However, as a means of maintaining the unique diocesan element of CSE, the introduction of an External Validation Team was added to the process.

Since 1989, there have been four approved versions and many drafts of the Rockhampton policy statements. All have stated very clearly that the purpose of CSR is accountability. The current version of the policy is entitled *Quality Assurance of Schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton* (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 2004) and makes no reference to self-renewing. The defining features of CSR in the Rockhampton diocese are that (i) it is not self-renewing and (ii) it involves an external team of validators.

### **2.7.0 Conclusion**

It is important to provide specific detail about the events shaping the practice of CSR in the Rockhampton diocese today, in order for the reader to have a clear understanding of why current practices prevail. The next chapter reviews the literature relevant to the research problem and the context in which it exists.

## Chapter Three

### Review of the Literature

#### 3.1 Purpose of the Study

This study explores Catholic School Renewal in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton from the perspectives of those school communities which have been involved in renewal. Specifically, the problem is explored from the personal perspectives of staff members from a selection of those primary school communities that have undertaken the examination phase of the Catholic School Renewal process.

#### 3.2 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature pertaining to the research problem and the context in which it exists. As the aims of CSR include quality assurance within a framework of school effectiveness, school improvement and educational change (Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland, 1986; Davis, 1999a; Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1995a, 1995b; Spry, 1995), it is necessary to review the literature relating to the areas of school effectiveness and school improvement. While each of these areas is worthy of study in its own right, the purpose of this research project dictates that each will be considered in the light of its relationship to CSR, as a means of attempting to ensure quality assurance and as a source of potential growth (Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland, 1986; Davis, 1999a; Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1995a, 1995b, 2004).

The literature review will consider the issue of planned change in schools from an international perspective and from a national perspective, prior to exploring issues directly related to the concept of the school as an agency of the Catholic Church. Finally, the history of CSR as it developed in Queensland, and specifically the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton, will be investigated.

##### 3.2.1 Conceptual Framework of the Literature Review

In order to illuminate the research issue of *how some staff members perceive Catholic School Renewal in some primary schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton*, it has been necessary to generate a conceptual framework.

The aims of CSR in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton are (a) to be a source of growth (Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland, 1986; Davis, 1999a; Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1995) and (b) to ensure the quality of Catholic education (Davis, 1999a; Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 2004). In conducting a review of the literature related to CSR it was necessary to initially conduct a general review of the literature. This illuminated some of the reasons underpinning the necessity for restructuring measures.

The literature revealed that as living systems, schools are self-renewing (Oliver, 1996; Sungaila, 1995; Wheatley, 1992, 1999); the needs of the clientele are changing and therefore schools need to adjust accordingly (Bolam, 1993; Bradley, 1993; Hargreaves, 1994); schools are attempting to improve student outcomes (Hopkins, Ainscow & West, 1994; O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998; Thrupp, 1999); schools which are continually reflecting, evaluating and seeking improvement are most likely to enhance student outcomes (O'Brien & Wylie, 2000); and parents are becoming more involved in the day-to-day activities of schools (Blackmore, 1999). These factors contribute to the perception that schools are becoming more accountable to the communities in which they are located, and therefore “must engage proactively with their communities [and] engage teachers and parents more with decision making” (Thornton, 2001, p. 36).

Having established a rationale for change, literature pertaining to some related concepts was reviewed. Total Quality Management was examined as a possible tool for dealing with change in schools (Hough, 1994). The literature suggests that there is a lack of agreement concerning the suitability or otherwise of this approach. It was concluded that there might be value in adopting it as a tool for facilitating change in the non-pedagogical areas of administration and management of the school.

In order to address the research proposition, it was essential to gain a clearer understanding of the impact of educational leadership, particularly the educational leadership provided by the principal and the Regional Supervisor of Schools, and the authenticity of leaders in these roles. It was also necessary to investigate the impact that the related areas of culture, vision and change have on a school. Prior to selecting a change process, it is important that the school decision makers have a clear understanding of these characteristics of the school because without doing so the process selected may not meet the needs of the particular school.

Given that change has been regarded as a cultural problem (Sarason, 1982), there is much written about *culture* (Cook, 1998; Fullan, 2005). The literature reveals many descriptions and definitions. Closely related to culture, the literature emphasises the importance of the school having an identity at a number of levels including local, system, national and global (McGaw, 1997). Donahue (1997) argues that it is necessary to have a clear understanding of culture because once the culture changes, everything changes.

The notion of vision was reviewed, concluding that it is necessary for the school leader to articulate a vision of what the school ought to be, not what the school currently is (Colton, 1985). This vision should inspire, motivate and actively involve others (Duke, 1990).

The literature relating to *planned educational change* was reviewed as an overarching concept. As “potential growth” (Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland, 1986; Davis, 1999a; Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1995) is one of the stated purposes of CSR, and as this translates to *planned educational change*, it is particularly important that there is a clear understanding of the existing conditions for change. A review of the literature reveals that it is evident that change is regarded as inevitable and necessary, and occurs in a number of ways (Fullan, 2005; Heifetz, 2004; Oliver, 1996; Sungaila, 1995). Change must be monitored, inclusive and have positive outcomes if it is to be worthwhile (Fullan, 1997; James, 1996; Oliver, 1996).

In order to capture a global understanding of the problem, literature was reviewed in relation to England and Wales, the USA, Hong Kong and New Zealand. The review revealed that although the concept of restructuring is referred to by a variety of names, and although there are a number of approaches worldwide, the experiences of these countries are remarkably similar (Boyle, 1999; O’Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998). There are both significant differences and some common problems (Burke, 1997; Caldwell, 1996; Crowther, 1997; Hanushek, 1996; Newman & Whelage, 1995; Summers & Johnson, 1995) and there are some common positives (Gibson, 1998).

As this research is situated within Australia, it was deemed necessary to investigate the history of restructuring and some practices nationally, in particular New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. In 1973 the Whitlam government published what is commonly referred to as

*The Karmel Report* which marked the beginning of the reform movement in Australia. It is evident that Australian states have moved down the devolution track at different rates, and that some have already rejected the philosophy of devolution, while others have embraced different aspects of it. There are some general trends and directions being taken nationally based around strategic planning and internal monitoring by schools. These trends mirror those being undertaken internationally.

As the research is being undertaken in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton, it is important that the researcher has an appreciation of some of the issues which have had an impact on Catholic schools in the diocese. Therefore, literature was reviewed regarding the nature of the Catholic Church and recent developments within it. Literature was reviewed regarding the Catholic education system generally. Literature relating specifically to CSR was also reviewed.

A review of the literature regarding post-Vatican II developments in Catholicism clarified that there have been sweeping reforms both conceptually and practically since the Vatican Council met between 1962 and 1965 (Arbuckle, 1993; Flannery, 1996c; O'Murchu, 1997). The literature clearly identifies the school as an agency of the Catholic Church, and that the school must therefore identify with and promote the Catholic Church's mission of promoting the Kingdom of God (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977; McLaughlin, 1998, 1999a, 1999b).

The review of the literature specific to CSR in Queensland as a whole and the Rockhampton diocese in particular traced the history of CSR as a response to Vatican II (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977, 1988; Griden, Grew & Heinstchel, 1985; Keane & Keane, 1997; McLaughlin, 1997; Spry, 2000), and then as a response to *Project Catholic "School"* (McLay, 1979). The literature revealed that at a state-wide level there were differing views of how CSR should be undertaken and that this resulted in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton adopting a different approach to that advocated by the Archdiocese of Brisbane (Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland, 1986; Davis, 1999a; Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1992, 1995a, 1995b, 2004).

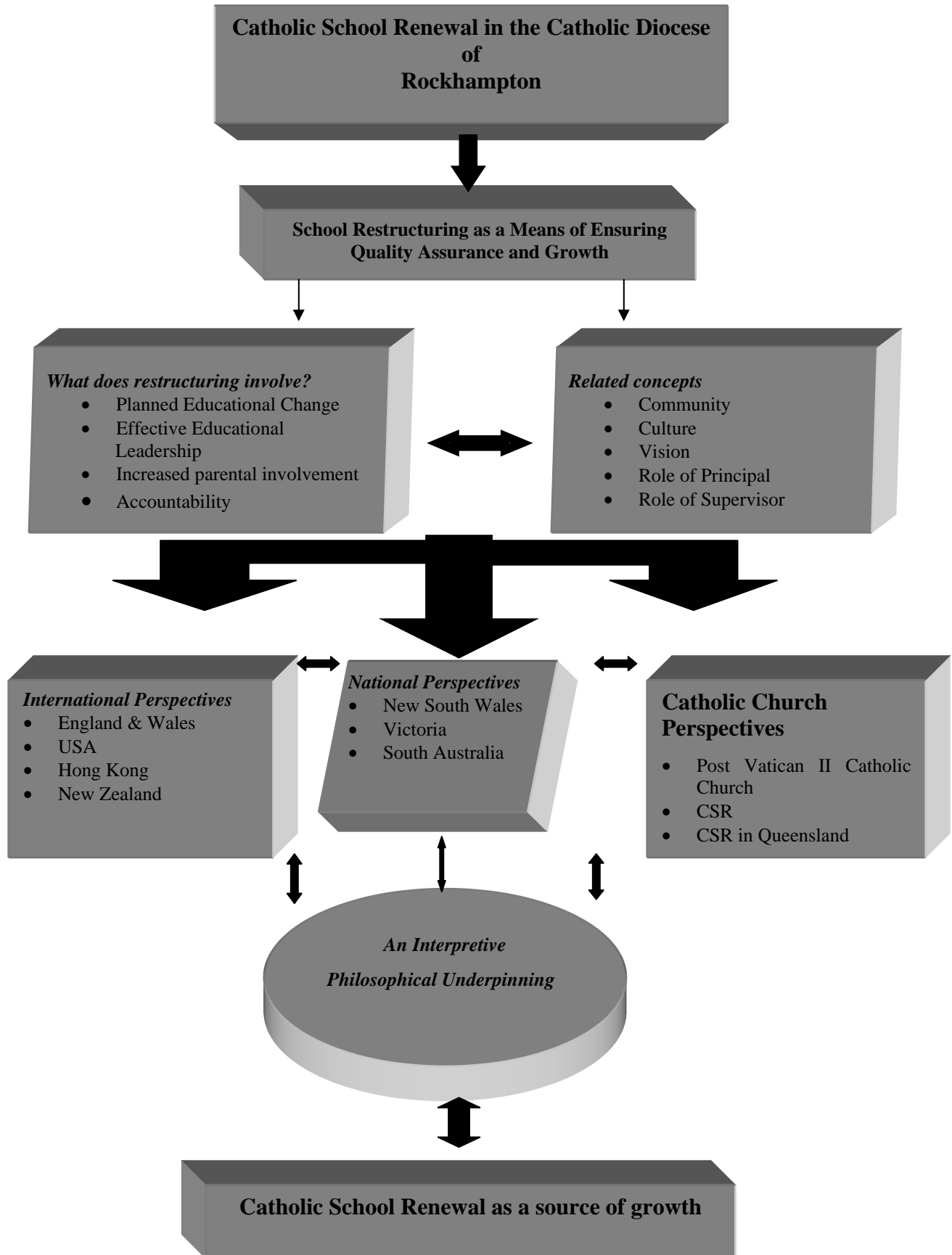
Having reviewed the literature from an interpretivist perspective, the literature review concludes that the approach to planned educational change undertaken in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton has many of the same positive and negative characteristics as approaches

undertaken by education authorities throughout the world. Unlike Rockhampton Catholic Education, the majority of authorities claim no religious affiliation. It is recommended that there is a need for more research in this area.

A diagrammatic representation of the conceptual framework of the Literature Review is provided in Figure 3.1.



**Figure 3.1 Conceptual Framework of the Literature Review**



### 3.3 School Restructuring: An Overview

For over forty years, since “thundering on the scene during the 1960s” (Fullan, 1998, p. 215), the school restructuring agenda has gained momentum internationally as there have been numerous attempts at planned educational change (Fullan, 1991). Indeed, Razik and Swanson (1995, p. 69) believe that “educational reform has become endemic”, stating that the forces leading to educational reform are not unique to education, with all public sector organisations having been subject to enormous changes over this period of time. These changes reflect worldwide changes in social, economic, political, and technological relationships (Ferlie, Pettigrew, Ashburner & Fitzgerald, 1997; Razik & Swanson, 1995).

Governments around the world are now engaged in the education reform business, with improving the micro-efficiency of the school being seen as a vehicle for addressing some of the macro-problems of the state and society (Riley, 2000). However, because the context for educational reform is a global one it adds to the complexities and creates a strong external imperative for change (Riley, 1998). Educational reform, policy and practice are shaped by political, structural, individual and social dynamics (Murphy & Adams, 1998), many aspects of which are context and culturally specific.

However, before embarking on the journey of school restructuring, a need for restructuring must first be established, as restructuring is not an end in itself. O’Donoghue & Dimmock (1998) make the point that school leaders cannot become complacent because schools have long traditions of success and achievement, and must recognise the need to change the *status quo*. Moreover, the progressive practices inherent in school restructuring require significant skill and persistence and it is always easier to revert to earlier-learned behaviours (Perkins, 2003). The answer lies in the reality that as a living system, a school is constantly and naturally changing, self-renewing and self-organising (Oliver, 1996; Sungaila, 1995; Wheatley, 1992, 1999); the context in which the school exists is rapidly changing in terms of accountability for performance and outcomes; and if not challenged to change there is a tendency for many school leaders to neglect the changing professional and educational aspects of their work (O’Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998). The needs of the clients of the school (families, students and wider community) are changing, and therefore the school needs to adjust to meet these needs (Bradley, 1993).

In recent times, the nature of schools has changed to the degree that schools need to embrace the world beyond their gates and work with the wider community to bring about positive change (Hargreaves, 1994). Hargreaves lists six reasons why contemporary schools need to connect to the wider community:

1. schools cannot shut their gates and leave the outside world on the doorstep;
2. schools are losing their monopoly on learning;
3. schools are one of our last hopes for rescuing and reinventing community;
4. teachers need a lot more help;
5. market competition, parental choice and individual self-management are already redefining how schools relate to their wider environments; and
6. schools can no longer be indifferent to the working lives that await their students when they move into the adult world (1997, pp. 4-5).

Bolam (1993) supports Hargreaves' ideas in reporting that a culture of consumer-led, market-oriented education and schools has emerged in a number of countries.

Snowdon and Gorton (1998) present the following premises as a rationale for educational change:

1. even if the status quo is not necessarily bad, there is usually room for improvement;
2. while all change does not necessarily lead to improvement, improvement is not likely to occur without change;
3. unless we attempt change, we are not likely to know whether a proposed innovation is better than the status quo; and
4. participation in the change process can result in greater understanding and appreciation of the desirable features of the status quo and can lead to a better understanding and appreciation of, and skill in, the change process itself.

O'Donoghue and Dimmock (1998) add to the discussion by presenting five major explanations for the emergence of restructuring in education:

1. Dissatisfaction Theory;
2. Caldwell and Spinks (1988) interpreted the politico-economic case for restructuring education as based on four values – equality, efficiency, liberty and choice ... centralized budgeting, with relatively uniform resource allocation to schools, impairs the achievement of equality and efficiency and by implication, choice – advocate site-based management;
3. Organisation Theory which suggests that the appropriate pattern of centralisation and decentralisation for an organisation was determined by the nature of techniques and technology required to accomplish the work, and the nature of the organisation's clients;
4. the case for restructuring has been justified on the basis of school effectiveness studies; and

5. a fifth explanation for restructuring focuses on the case for teacher professionalism and empowerment.

Some other justifications for not merely maintaining the status quo include the belief that people are rarely satisfied with the status quo in education (Snowdon & Gorton, 1998); schools are in need of significant change and must continue to develop processes and techniques to facilitate effective change, or even complete renewal (Coombs, 1991; Levine, 1992; Snowdon & Gorton, 1998; Solomon & Hughes, 1992); and because the restructuring agenda attempts to bring all students to a deeper understanding of how their world works, and in so doing responds to workplace requirements and demonstrates the legitimacy of the school system (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1998; Starratt, 2004).

In an attempt to improve the quality of schools in terms of outcomes for students, many attempts and experiments in reform have been undertaken over the past thirty years on an international scale. During the 1980s there were three identifiable waves of reform: school effectiveness; school improvement and restructuring; and total redesign (Holly, 1990). Currently, educational restructuring is taking place in many countries. While approaches and priorities differ, the differences tend to be differences of emphasis rather than substance. The degree of commonality and similarity is surprising (O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998; Riley, 2000).

Beare, Caldwell and Millikan (1989, p. 1) have described the purpose of the effective schools movement as “a concerted attempt in several countries to rediscover ways of creating really excellent schools”. The term *effectiveness* has been described as the production or accomplishment of a desired result or outcome (Levine & Lezotte, 1990), and deliberately changing or accomplishing something (Beare et al., 1989). The focus has often been on student performance, which can be most readily measured (Reynolds, Sammons, Stoll, Barber & Hillman, 1996; Stringfield & Herman, 1996). The questions to be answered when addressing the issue of effectiveness are what are the targets and who sets them. In short, effectiveness is not a neutral term (Carter, 1998), but has many meanings which are defined by a variety of groups.

It can be difficult for teachers to contend with the ever-changing expectations of society regarding what the purposes of education should be (Tsoukas, 1994). Sammons, Hillman and Mortimore (1997) suggest that teachers tend to view the school effectiveness movement as

concerned more with teacher accountability than providing a high quality of education and therefore view it cautiously as an imposed way to prove rather than improve quality (Rogers & Badham, 1992). Carter (1998) suggests that teachers may not have ownership of school effectiveness as a means of *making a difference*, but rather that the purpose of the school effectiveness movement is for others external to the school to impose still further accountability demands.

There is a considerable amount of evidence suggesting that reforms that have been undertaken under the guise of *devolved decision-making* or *teacher empowerment* have actually served to reinforce the status quo, retain real authority in the hands of administrators, and have actually had a negative effect on teachers' morale and status (Australian Teaching Council, 1995; Limerick, Cunnington & Crowther, 1998; Rice & Schneider, 1994). These reforms have made conditions worse for teachers and students.

Teachers need to be presented with a sound reason why they should participate in school reform activities (Block, 1993), and the teachers must be recognised and treated as the real reformers (Snowdon & Gorton, 1998). The reform initiative should be well constructed because "if reform is experienced as a constant round of 'flavour of the month' initiatives, it will create cynicism and frustration" (Riley, 2000, p. 43). Teacher disillusionment emanates from "too many ad hoc, unconnected, superficial innovations" (Fullan, 2005, p. 21). Teachers are less influenced by management strategies and more by their own beliefs, those of their peers and by other more elusive cultural matters (Sergiovanni, 1996).

On a more positive note, if we accept that the purpose of school effectiveness is "a concerted attempt ... to rediscover ways of creating really excellent schools" (Beare et al., 1989, p. 1), the element of the process which is missing is that of moving from the identification of effectiveness to the achievement of excellence. The work on school improvement has attempted to address this area (Carter, 1998).

The primary purpose of school improvement efforts can be expressed as the effect that the improvement will have on the students and teachers at the classroom level. The emphasis is on enhancing the school's capacity for change and implementing specific reforms (Hopkins, Ainscow & West, 1994) which will enhance pupil progress, achievement and development

(Carter, 1998). School improvement is about school communities taking control of their future by inviting others to work with them in an attempt to improve or develop the particular school community, and in so doing, “enhancing student outcomes as well as strengthening the schools’ capacity for change” (Hopkins et al., 1994, p. 2).

School improvement efforts are considered to be important as education policies now assume increased involvement by parents in students’ learning, school decision-making on school boards and school councils, and fundraising (Blackmore, 1999; O’Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998; Plowden, 1967; Taylor Committee, 1979). It is therefore reasonable to assume that school communities would be striving for school improvement.

Fundamental to the school improvement paradigm is the emphasis placed upon notions of the school as the centre of change, where it is recognised that ultimately school improvement comes from within and cannot be externally mandated ... policy can be made externally ... change comes from the internal process of implementation (Carter, 1998, p. 56).

The OECD-sponsored International School Improvement Project (ISIP) provided a much quoted and generally accepted definition of school improvement:

a systemic, sustained effort aimed at change in learning conditions and other related internal conditions in one or more schools, with the ultimate aim of accomplishing educational goals more effectively (Van Velzen, Miles, Ekholm, Hameyer & Robin, 1985, p. 48).

At a more general level, it is suggested that decentralisation provides the means to improve the performance of education systems (Johansson & Lundberg, 2000). However, no particular formula for ensuring school improvement emerges from the literature; there is no global panacea as no characteristic is significant in all settings (Creemers & Reezigt, 1997).

Hopkins et al. (1994) note that if communities elect to undertake school improvement efforts, it is necessary for them to be provided with a process to do so. It is argued that ideally the people involved in the school improvement process are the people who are most closely associated with the school. This group of people includes teachers, senior management, governors and parents. The literature suggests that the approach of such people will be substantially different from that

of office-based bureaucrats. Barth (1990) suggests that the success or otherwise relies on the existing internal conditions of the school. Hopkins et al. state that this type of school improvement “embodies the long term goal of moving towards the ‘ideal type’ or ‘self renewing school’” (1994, p. 68).

However, merely having a process does not guarantee a successful outcome as there needs to be effective leadership in order to implement the change. Much of the literature on the effectiveness of organisations attributes significance to the role of leadership; there is a significant correlation between the effectiveness of the performance of a leader and the outcomes of an organisation (McCorley, 1999b).

### **3.3.1 Effective Leadership by the Principal**

In 1977, the British Department of Education and Science stated that the most important ingredient in the process of change would appear to be effective leadership (Department of Employment and Science, 1977), usually the principal (Chapman, 1986). This assertion has been repeated many times since (Duignan, 1997; Fullan, 2005; Sammons et al., 1997; Snowdon & Gorton, 1998), with the added caveat that the principal can also be the biggest hindrance to change as “the principal’s actions carry the message as to whether a change is to be taken seriously” (Berman & McLaughlin, 1977, p. 24). There is a strong correlation between principals who are good facilitators and managers of change, and principals who are strong supporters of their staffs and are prepared to be innovative and forward moving (Wohlstetter, 1997). The affirming presence of the school leader creates an affirming presence among and between the staff and students (Starratt, 2004). As these principals have the ability to both motivate staff and facilitate (or hinder) change, they are central to the successful implementation of change (Bolam, 1993; Fullan, 2005; Starratt, 2004).

By the mid 1990s, the face of what had come to be recognised as a ‘typical’ education department had changed. The hierarchy had ‘shrunk’ and had been replaced by networks of schools, each responsible for delivering an education service (Limerick et al., 1998). O’Donoghue and Dimmock (1998, pp. 16-17) conclude that:

The change from control by central office to school-based management has necessarily reconfigured the principal’s position from being a middle manager in a long hierarchy to being a senior manager in charge of a more self-managing organisation. This means that

the principal is a key change agent, responsible for managing the change process and bringing about a successful transition to school-based management ... introduction and implementation of school development planning, staff appraisal and performance management, new student-centred curriculum.

This has necessitated the broadening of the principal's role to include the following areas of responsibility:

- educational or instructional leadership;
- management of non-specifically educational aspects of the school;
- management of the school community and the external environment; and
- management and leadership of change (O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998, p. 15).

The principal is responsible for working in a partnership with parents to act as a steward of the school's purposes and structures, while also endeavouring to serve those who struggle to embody these purposes (Sergiovanni, 1996). As the leader of the school, "the principal should direct his or her efforts to connecting parents, teachers and students morally to each other, while placing what's best for the students at the centre of all decision-making" (Sergiovanni, 1996, p. 83). The principal will practise *authentic leadership* (Bhindi & Duignan, 1997) which allows for the public declaration of the values, purposes and virtues (Sergiovanni, 1992) espoused by the school, as well as professional and political leadership (Riley, 2000). The authentic leader "cultivates and sustains an environment that promotes the work of authentic teaching and learning" (Starratt, 2004, p. 81). This in turn adds an element of value specification, articulation and exhibition to the role of the principal (Campbell-Evans, 1993).

Principals need to be secure enough in their own identity to freely share and distribute leadership responsibilities among teachers and other key stakeholders, creating an environment where other stakeholders are willing to take on leadership of the school as a community. This is referred to as *Parallel Leadership* (Crowther, Hann & McMaster, 2002a; Crowther, Hann & Andrews, 2002b).

Parallel Leadership (Crowther et al., 2001, 2002a; Crowther et al., 2002b) is an emerging concept of school leadership which is described as "a form of distributed leadership that recognises definitive teacher leadership roles and posits a particular form of relatedness between teacher leaders and their principals" (Crowther et al., 2002b, p. 10). The concept of Parallel



Leadership asserts that where teacher leadership is flourishing, there is substantive reform taking place (Katzenmyer & Moller, 2001). The concept acknowledges the rightful place of teachers as leaders, while supporting the role of the principal “engaging in collective action” (Crowther et al., 2002b, p. 11) with teachers to achieve successful school improvement. Leadership is not the property of any one individual or group, but grows out of the shared vision, beliefs and efforts of a committed group of teachers who have a sense of belonging, a sense of being valued members of their school community and a deep commitment to collective action for whole-school success (Crowther et al., 2002b).

Crowther et al. (2002b) suggest an alternative leadership paradigm for principals which is linked to successful reform; it encompasses the following five functions:

1. visioning – the developmental work of the school is linked to an inspiring image of a preferred future;
2. identity generation – through which cultural meaning is created;
3. alignment of organisational elements – in which the implementation of school-based innovations is approached holistically;
4. distribution of power and leadership – whereby teachers (and community members) are encouraged to view themselves as critically important in shaping the school’s direction and values and in exercising influence beyond the school; and
5. external alliances and networking – through which schools collaborate with other schools and with elements of the broader community while keeping for themselves activities that reflect their distinctive competencies.

Having recognised the essential role of the principal as a major contributing factor to the success of a school improvement strategy or change initiative, another area to briefly explore is that of the role of districts, or in the case of the Catholic education sector, Diocesan Catholic Education, and the personnel who supervise the work of principals.

### **3.3.2 The Role of the Regional Supervisor of Schools and the System Office**

In recent years, state and federal policies in the United States have increasingly rendered local districts as irrelevant in the process of educational change (Elmore, 1993, 1997; Elmore & Burney, 1999; Massell & Goertz, 1999; Spillane, 1996). Some critics of school districts claim that they have no role to play and that they are simply inefficient bureaucratic institutions (Chubb & Moe, 1990; Elmore 1993) which are unresponsive to public, teacher and student

needs (Marsh, 2000). Others regard them as necessary only as institutions through which policies and funding must pass (Marsh, 2000).

Despite this trend in policy, an increasing number of studies in recent years suggest that districts do play a key role and are important agents of change (Chrispeels, 1997; Kirp & Cyrus, 1995; Massell & Goertz, 1999; Spillane, 1996). Marsh (2000) lists the following factors pertaining to school districts which have emerged from the literature as being important in determining how districts deal with implementing policy and change:

- capacity;
- size;
- understanding;
- leadership;
- organisation and governance;
- political culture and reform history; and
- nature of the policy.

Capacity refers to the capacity to learn new ideas. This factor is further reduced to human capacity, social capacity and physical capital (Spillane & Thompson, 1997). Human capacity includes personal commitment to learning and necessitates the provision of professional development for teachers if reform is to succeed. Social capital refers to the relationships that exist within an organisation and is manifest by trust, collaboration and the inclusion of teachers and principals in decisions that will have an effect on them. Physical capital includes the financial resources allocated to staffing, time and resources (Chrispeels, 1997; Spillane & Thompson, 1997; Swan, 1998).

The issue of size is closely related to capacity. Firestone and Fuhrman (1998) assert that change is more likely to happen in larger districts as they have the resources to facilitate change. Hannaway and Kimball (1997) agree, adding that larger districts also have the outside connections to access sources of information and technical assistance.

It is reported under the heading of *Understanding* that variations in understanding contributed to variations in support for reforms (Spillane & Thompson, 1997). The understandings are shaped

by the sources of information from which one draws one's local context, personal beliefs and experiences (Spillane, 1997).

There is some evidence that the beliefs, skills, and energy of people in specific positions makes a difference (Firestone & Fuhrman, 1998), and that strong leadership from school supervisors facilitates a change initiative, whereas there was less support for the initiative from districts where the supervisors were less involved. It was also found that there was a greater chance of initiatives being adopted if the supervisor had a passion for the initiative prior to it being elevated to reform status. Sustained reform is less likely to occur in the absence of a leader who has a clear understanding of the direction in which the school should be heading and who can steer and facilitate the change process (Fullan, 2005).

The cognitive understanding and knowledge that Regional Supervisors of Schools have of reform efforts has a considerable effect on how well or otherwise reforms are implemented and resourced in a district (Fullan, 2005; Marsh, 2000; Massell & Goertz, 1999; Price, Ball & Luks, 1995; Spillane, 1997, 1998). This, combined with the school leader's ability to balance central authority and school authority, has a huge impact on the level of support or lack of support given to reform ideas and policies (Marsh, 2000).

Fullan (2003, 2005) asserts that the Supervisor of Schools is one of the key players in assuring purposeful interaction between and among individuals within and across the 'tri-levels' of school, district and system and, through his/her lateral interaction with other schools and districts, plays a significant role in the sustainability of reforms. It is the Regional Supervisor of Schools who can communicate the big picture and who is best placed to discover examples of local success that connect to the big picture. The successful Regional Supervisor of Schools will have a lot to say and should be "transparent, coherent, and inspiring about the short- and long-term purposes of reform" (Fullan, 2005, p. 90).

A number of research projects (David, 1990; Elmore & Burney, 1999; McGaw, 1997; McGaw, Piper, Banks & Evans, 1992; Quinn, 2000) conclude that the provision of professional

development is necessary for the implementation of successful change. Local context and personal beliefs also impact on people's perceptions as do strong leadership and energy from district personnel (Firestone & Fuhrman, 1998). These are major factors in the successful implementation of change.

The other major stakeholders in school improvement and effectiveness are the teachers.

### **3.3.3 Teacher Leadership**

As mentioned earlier in Section 3.3.1, teacher leadership has emerged as a major theme in implementing lasting school change. In the past, research on school improvement has focused mainly on the role of the principal (Boucher, 2003). The nature of contemporary educational reform, however, has led to a more collaborative approach.

Authentic and self sustaining educational change depends on the commitment, enthusiasm and motivation of those involved in the process (Fullan, 2005; Gronn, 2000; Marsh, 2000). If change is to be effective it should be continuous with participation by all stakeholders, manifest in a collaborative approach which will contribute to the growth of the school. This is best achieved through decentralisation (Croswell & Elliot, 2001; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Macmillan, Orr, & Sherman, 2000).

The movement towards decentralisation has required the development of shared decision-making in many areas including policy, curriculum implementation, budgeting, maintenance and development. Consequently, "[t]he role of the teacher has moved away from its traditional base of classroom instruction and become more complex and arguably more stressful" (Croswell & Elliot, 2001, p. 72). Over the last twenty years it has been difficult for teachers because morale, public image, professional image and public and political support have been at an ebb (Crowther, 2005). The sharing of responsibilities beyond classroom responsibilities has initiated research into leadership displayed by classroom teachers.

Teacher leadership is claimed to be catalytic in promoting self sustaining change (Crowther & Olsen, 1997; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). Teacher leaders possess self-generated motivation, competencies and enthusiasm that enable them to draw out the best in student learning.

Although studies demonstrate that principals only have an indirect influence on the achievement of students, it is through their involvement with teachers that student learning is nurtured (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Macmillan et al., 2000). Therefore, the need to develop shared leadership practices where each staff member contributes to the decision making process is greater than ever. If schools are to continue to develop the reliance on teacher co-operation, collegiality and commitment is crucial.

Traditionally schools have operated as a layered hierarchy of authority where the classroom teacher is at the base of the triangle. Research links lasting school improvement to the committed co-operation of teachers, but the accountability responsibility is still centred on principals (Crowther et al., 2002b; Starratt, 2004). As leadership in schools is taking on many forms, teacher roles are becoming more complex and the relationships developed between principals and teacher leaders are becoming more significant in promoting school improvement.

The current educational environment has seen great pressure being placed on schools to raise standards of student achievement. There have been pressures placed on schools to be more efficient and accountable with the end result seeing schools placing greater emphasis on management strategies that are derived from economic rationalism and market driven forces (Patching, 1999). An example of this can be seen in the standards movement, which has seen a proliferation in expectations placed on schools by government, community, and school systems and even by classroom teachers themselves (Cimbricz, 2002).

Contributing to this is the body of thought that the real challenge facing schools is not how to improve but rather how to sustain improvement. A problem in large-scale reform and in its sustainability is that “the terms travel well, but the underlying conceptualisation and thinking do not” (Fullan, 2005, p. 10). The argument put forward by current research, that sustainability will depend upon a school’s internal capacity to maintain and support the work of teachers, is gathering momentum (Harris & Chapman, 2001). Sustaining student improvement can be

achieved through capacity building and preparing teachers to lead innovation and development (Harris, 2002). This supports the inference that the significant role of leadership distribution is in generating and sustaining improvement in schools (Fullan, 2005; Gronn, 2000).

Sustaining school improvement demands that many staff members in the school develop and display leadership capacity. This is in contrast to the traditional view of leadership where only a few appointed people were expected to lead (or manage the work of those below them). In order to develop such leadership capacity specific factors are necessary. Teacher commitment and its contribution to the quality of teaching has been identified as one of the critical factors in the success of school reform (Croswell & Elliot, 2001). It is suggested that analysing the work function of teachers is the first step to introducing strategic structural change and improvement.

Whether or not teachers view it consciously, the implication that leadership is a shared enterprise, invites them to be leaders at various times (Harris, 2002). This view, coined *distributed leadership*, squarely aims the role of leadership on the shoulders of all staff and helps to form a greater basis for the notion of teacher leadership (Spillane, Halveson & Diamond, 2001).

An important assumption that highlights the role of teacher leadership is that pedagogical leadership cannot be separated from educational leadership. Good educational leaders keep student learning as the focus of their work, no matter what task or activity they undertake.

With learning as a school's core mission, the focus on curriculum leadership has also gained momentum. Where teachers provide for and encourage effective learning and teaching, their role as leaders in the school is heightened (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). It is argued that the curriculum leaders successfully contribute to the shape and practice of school reform and since this is a shared phenomenon amongst teachers particularly, it is the classroom teacher who ultimately promotes school improvement.

This differs from the traditional view of leadership and may explain why it is becoming more difficult to attract suitable applicants for formal (or traditional) executive style leadership

positions in schools. Reports on the decreasing number of people applying for principalship and other senior leadership positions are becoming prolific. Citing reasons like “the balance of lifestyle, personal qualities and professional aspirations, as well as the job itself” (D’Arbon, Duignan, Duncan & Goodwin, 2001, p. 13), and the call for an authentic leadership is gathering momentum (Duignan & Bhindi, 1997).

Duignan and Bhindi (1997) list four elements of authentic leadership:

1. the first defines authenticity as a service view of leadership. Leaders earn the commitment and loyalty of other staff members through their personal interactions. Organisational structures, processes and practices are central to this concept;
2. the second element of authentic leadership involves a visionary section. Visionary leadership is energised by the work of the members of the school and builds community;
3. the third element is one of spirituality where the leaders help others to find and share meaning in the work they do. This helps to promote moral and ethical decision making; and
4. the fourth element relates to sensibility. Leadership that is sensitive to the feelings, aspirations and needs of others. This conceptualisation of leadership from a teacher’s perspective is gaining popularity.

Each teacher brings a unique combination of knowledge, experience, skills and values to his or her role. Through their interaction with students and other members of the school community, effective teachers are constantly concerned with developing high quality learning in the classroom and the school. Teachers exhibiting this value are described as teacher leaders (Fried, 2001). Teacher leadership is not a formal role, responsibility or set of tasks. It can be defined as being empowered to lead work in schools that has direct impact upon the quality of teaching and learning (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001); teachers helping teachers which, in turn, leads to greater support for student learning.

Viewing leadership in schools as a function of teachers’ work has developed great momentum in recent years (Crowther & Olsen, 1997; Crowther et al., 2001, 2002a; Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson & Hann, 2002c). The type of leadership tasks that a teacher exercises depends upon a variety of factors and can be categorised into six main areas of activity (Crowther & Olsen, 1997; Gronn, 2000; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001):

1. continuing to teach and to improve individual teaching proficiency and skill;

2. organising and leading peer review of teaching practices;
3. providing curriculum development knowledge;
4. participating in school level decision making;
5. leading in-service training and staff development activities; and
6. engaging other teachers in collaborative action planning, reflection and research.

Through these roles, it is clear that the functions of teacher leadership are essentially collaborative. The roles taken on by classroom teachers, the essential nature of their daily life and the interaction with their students enable teachers to gain leadership expertise through working cooperatively with each other.

Many teachers exhibit leadership qualities and skills through their daily instructional practice. The conclusions of an Australian study showed the link between strategic, transformational and educative leadership in the daily work tasks of effective classroom teachers (Crowther & Olsen, 1997). Another Australian study (Crowther et al., 2002c) demonstrated a close relationship between teaching and leading school reform. In *Teachers as Leaders Framework* (Crowther et al., 2002c), the authors conceptualize the daily work of teachers in terms of leadership attributes. These attributes are often used to define the leadership of principals and leadership teams.

It is evident that the focus on leadership has moved towards a focus on the individual and away from the 'expert' and 'keeper of the knowledge'. This movement acknowledges the complexity of school life and by doing so places the teacher in a prominent position to impact upon the learning of the students.

Having reviewed the literature relating to the effect of leadership by the principal, district personnel and teachers, it is also necessary to explore the broader area of educational leadership.

### **3.3.4 Authentic Educational Leadership**

Leadership is often spoken of as if it were simply advanced management. The tasks of management and leadership are separate and distinct, and to equate or confuse the two is to miss the essential distinction. To manage is to work at the level of the system, but to lead is to work



in the depths beneath the system, “in the primal areas where the dragon lives” (Owen, 1999, p. 53).

Richard Higginson (1996, p. 26) provides us with some aphorisms on the distinction between leadership and management:

The manager has a short-range view; the leader has a long-term perspective; the manager has his [sic] eye always on the bottom line; the leader has his [sic] eye on the horizon; managers are people who do things right, leaders are people who do the right thing.

Higginson (1996, p. 26) elaborates on this with a perspective on leadership that suggests that it “is about setting a direction and motivating others to follow”. He believes that leadership is about aligning and inspiring; being accessible, competent and having integrity; and about leading while others follow. Kouzes and Posner (2003) add credibility, caring for others, mobility and listening. They also suggest that leaders should strive to be liked, as people don’t follow a technique, but rather a person - the message and the embodiment of the message. Leaders will be judged and supported by the attitudes they display, more so than by their behaviours (Duignan, 1997; Gronn & Ribbins, 1996; Short, Greer & Melvin, 1994; Southworth, 1995).

*Authentic Leadership* “elevates the actions of the leader above mere pragmatics or expediency” (Duignan, 2002) and is “a venture in moral philosophy” (Hodgkinson, 1991, p. 50). It is centrally concerned with ethics and morality and with deciding what is significant, what is right and what is worthwhile (Duignan & MacPherson, 1992). It is a move away from conventional wisdom about leadership and derives its legitimacy from personal integrity, credibility and commitment to ethical and moral conduct in organisational relationships (Bhindi & Duignan, 1997; Duignan, 2002, 2003b; Duignan & Bhindi, 1997; Hodgkinson, 1991; Samos, 2002). Authentic leadership requires moral and managerial attributes, the one being insufficient without the other (Sergiovanni, 1992). Many educators in leadership roles, however, have little or no formal experience in, or exposure to, ethical or moral analysis and therefore lack the vocabulary to deal with and name moral issues; this then presents itself as one of the issues which they must confront (Starratt, 2004). Moral leadership involves the difficult but authentic work of

“pursuing the human, educational, and civic good of the students and teachers while responding to specific interpersonal, institutional, and political situations” (Starratt, 2004, p. 45).

Authentic leadership “is also visionary, political, functional, team, personal and ecumenic” (Duignan, 2002). Authentic leaders act on what they know to be *right*. To do this they are guided by ethical and moral frameworks (Hodgkinson, 1991; Sergiovanni, 1992; Starratt, 1993, 1994, 2004). In Duignan’s (1998, p. 23) view:

Authentic leaders take action to bring change, to move us closer to the ideal of authenticity. They raise themselves and others to higher levels of motivation and morality and spirituality. They are engaged in a ‘work of retrieval’ of the ideal of authenticity which helps infuse practice with a higher purpose and meaning. They are able to articulate this higher ideal in order to lift the culture back up, ‘closer to its motivating ideal’.

Duignan (2002) defines Authentic Leadership as:

1. *Veritas*: Discovering emergent self - “To Thine Own Self Be True”
2. *Caritas*: Authentic Relationships Based on ‘Love One Another’
3. *Gravitas*: A Reasonable Wisdom Sourced in Spirituality

This definition warrants further discussion:

1. *Veritas* refers to the search for and discovery of authentic self and being true to this self. The search for authentic self must be more than a self-centred narcissistic approach and include issues of significance beyond the self-referential choice (Taylor, 1991).
2. *Caritas* refers to the “meaningful interactions and relationships which are, in turn, not only desirable, but necessary for authentic leadership” (Duignan, 2002). *Caritas* is linked closely to the concepts of interrelationships, interdependency and mutuality of interests, which in turn are associated with such processes as teamwork, networks, collaborative planning and shared vision. This concept is strongly aligned with our humanness and search for meaning (O’Murchu, 1997).
3. For Duignan (2002), *Gravitas* refers to “personal qualities such as being ‘depthed’, being wise, even sacred or spiritual”. The sense of the spiritual is paramount and entails “living out a set of deeply held personal values, of honouring forces or a presence greater than ourselves” (Block, 1993, p. 48). Authentic leaders are “spiritual beings; they want meaning, a sense of doing something that matters” (Covey, 1992, p. 178).

Credibility of a leader is important as those who perceive their leaders to be credible are more likely to:

- be proud to tell others they're part of the organisation;
- feel a strong sense of team spirit;
- see their own personal values as consistent with those of the organisation;
- feel attached and committed to the organisation; and
- have a sense of ownership of the process (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 26).

Conversely, when leaders are perceived to have low credibility those who work with them are more likely to:

- produce only if they are being watched carefully;
- be motivated primarily by money;
- say good things about the organisation publicly but criticise it privately;
- consider looking for another job if the organisation experiences problems; and
- feel unsupported and unappreciated. (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 26).

It is important for leaders to be credible and to have a sense of direction (Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

Higginson adds a Christian perspective, alluding to the fact that there are three images of leadership in the New Testament, namely, servant, shepherd and steward. He adds the sobering observation that “in a Christian appraisal of leadership ... in the final resort, leaders are answerable to God” (Higginson, 1996, p. 26).

Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes. Sergiovanni (1996, p. 87) states that “leadership is generally viewed as a process of getting a group to take action that embodies the leader’s purposes”.

School leadership is not about prestige, position or place, but rather an attitude and a sense of responsibility for making a difference (Kouzes & Posner, 2003). One of its central qualities is the ability to encounter others well (Duignan, 1999) while transforming the school into a moral community (Sergiovanni, 1996). School leadership does not depend on mystical qualities or inborn gifts, but rather on the ability of leaders to know themselves and to learn from the feedback received during their daily lives (Kouzes & Posner, 2003). It is also incumbent upon the leader to allow and encourage appropriate structure to emerge as “The function of leadership is to grow structure, not impose it” (Owen, 1999, p. 99).

Leadership is spiritually grounded (Khavari, 2000; Moxley, 2000; Sergiovanni, 1996; Sinetar, 1998; Spitzer, 2000), and, as all people possess some form of spirituality, it is evident that all employees will want to be involved in the activity of leadership (Moxley, 2000). As leadership does not exist in a vacuum, but is in fact a group phenomenon (Razik & Swanson, 1995), with its function being to “grow structure” (Owen, 1999, p. 99), Limerick et al.’s (1998, p. 223) the following observation comes as no surprise:

... every single study that has specifically looked at the distribution of leadership behaviour in groups has found that it is never in the hands of just one person ... it is more accurate to think of different leadership roles in a group than to think of ‘the leader’.

Leadership needs to be thought of in terms of shared leadership, collaborative leadership or multiple leadership roles, with the individuals undertaking facilitative behaviour towards a common goal (Limerick et al., 1998). Leadership is distributed within an organisation, rather than being the task of a sole designated leader (Cheng, 1996; Crowther et al., 2001; Limerick et al., 1998; Fullan, 2005; Ogawa & Bossert, 1995; Sultmann & McLaughlin, 2000) and is an organic activity, dependent on interrelationships and connections (Riley, Docking & Rowles, 2001). The concept of *collective intelligence* (Crowther, 2005) value-adds to leadership as it is asserted that the sum intelligence of a group can be far greater than that of individuals. Leadership does not come naturally to all leaders; it can be learned, and it does not happen without practice (Owen, 1999; Kouzes & Posner, 2003). This assertion is contradicted, however, by other theorists who argue that individuals are born with clear limitations as to how far we can progress along the leadership path. Jaques (1998), for example, conducted a longitudinal study spanning fifty years which concluded that no amount of experience will enable one to go further than our natural aptitude allows.

Spitzer (2000) advocates *inspired* leadership. He believes that inspirational leadership is infectious and requires humility as a way of (a) cultivating trust, vision and spirit; and (b) as a means of the leader recognising that there are many people in the organisation who know more about specific areas of it than the leader does, and that this is necessary for the organisation to progress. The same author (p. 257) further states that “effective leaders must possess the virtues of prudence, courage and self-discipline, and the skills of vision for the common good; dealing with negative feedback; and soft-bargaining.”

The inspired leader, armed with the above virtues and skills, will adopt a *win-win, soft-bargaining* style which will engender friendship and common cause. Under this style of leadership, the need for oversight decreases and is replaced by greater synergy and serendipity (Spitzer, 2000).

While there is a distinction between leadership and management, and genuine leadership is required to bring about change, the leadership must be linked to good management – leadership and management must hold together (Owen, 1999). The theories and practices of educational leadership cannot simply be imported from other sectors, as what is considered good leadership for corporations and other organisations, usually the “profit-centred business world” (Hargreaves, 1995, p. 1), may not serve the goals of education, and, further, may not be appropriate for church-affiliated organisations. School leaders need to develop their own theories and practices “that emerge from and are central to what schools are like, what schools are trying to do, and what kinds of people they serve” (Sergiovanni, 1996, pp. xii-xiii).

In his work on school restructuring, Donahue (1997, pp. 161-162) argues five conclusions. The first is that schools rely on their principal too much. The other conclusions are that:

- the school restructuring process should be undertaken as a formal reorganisation of the school;
- formalising the process would lessen the school’s vulnerability to changes in leadership and staff;
- every member of the school community should have an active role; and
- schools need an external change agent.

He further states that the role of the change agent has a limited life span and that the change agent is dispensable. However, the principal “has the most crucial and sensitive role” (Donahue, 1997, p. 168). The principal, in collaboration with others, is responsible for ensuring that change is planned.

### **3.3.5 Planned Educational Change**

If school improvement processes are to be of use, it needs to be established that they do impact on the children attending the school. In the mid 1960s and the early 1970s, assertions were made in both the United States (Coleman, Campbell, Hobson, McPartland, Weinfield & York, 1966) and Britain (Plowden, 1967) that schools had very little real influence on children. Until the late

1980s, it was doubted that the school a child attended made any difference to student learning and results (Hopkins et al., 1994). It was asserted that students were able to learn despite or in spite of the school attended. Effective Schools research however, consistently demonstrated the correlations between student achievement and a stable set of school organisation and process characteristics known as “correlates”. It is now recognised that the school does have the ability to make a difference and therefore does matter (Hopkins et al., 1994). There is, however a need to manage change effectively:

The pace of change over the last decade has been fierce, and some educational observers have called for a period of stability. I think we have to question whether stability is a virtue, or indeed can be afforded, and whether the pressure of change is a destructive force. The challenge is to ensure that change is managed effectively and focuses on essential, realistic and sustainable objectives (Osler, 2001, p. 3).

The case for planned educational change has been established because all living things go through cyclical processes of growth and decline at all levels - organic, psychological and physical. Change and self-renewal are natural phenomena (Oliver, 1996; Sungaila, 1995; Wheatley, 1992, 1999), and it is natural to assume that, as living systems, schools will change and self-renew. The case for planned educational change is strengthened because of a need for schools to be accountable, informed and in touch with the community (Hargreaves, 1994, 1997; O’Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998; Snowdon & Gorton, 1998). Indeed it is becoming increasingly accepted that change is an inevitable and integral aspect of organisational life, particularly within educational life (Oliver, 1996):

... change is an inevitable feature of the 1990s – an unending flow of new policy initiatives, shifts in curriculum and assessment, the devolution of greater authority and responsibility to schools, new technologies, a mushrooming of school committees, more and longer meetings ... (Finger, 1994, p. 44)

Therefore organisations that resist change and thus maintain the *status quo*, will find themselves “balanced on the fine line between stability and stagnation” (Oliver, 1996, p. 3). Neither stability nor stagnation is acceptable or appropriate to a dynamic organisation. Handy and Aitken (1990, p. 102) suggest that the “only certainty about the future is its uncertainty, that there will be changes”. Not all changes will be monumental; indeed, adaptive models of change are sensitive to the situation of the individual school and the local context. Even so, addressing adaptive change also requires complex learning in what are often politically contentious

situations where there are many internal forces pulling those involved back to the status quo (Heifetz, 2004).

There will be quiet times along with the times of great change, but change should unfold as a series of stages that merge into each other (Fullan, 1991; Miles, 1986) with the processes involved in meaningful change within an organisation being inter-linked (Darcy, 2000; King, 1999; McNaught 1997, 2000; Thomas & Betts, 2000). Change is a long-term process and is dependent on it being seen as everyone's business (Halsall, 1998), but, however it occurs, it should be viewed as the *norm*.

The ultimate purpose of any planned change must be to enable the school to accomplish its educational goals more effectively and efficiently as a means of benefiting all the students who attend the school (Carter, 1998; Fullan, 1991, 1993b). The change should therefore alter "basic issues of schooling such as goals, beliefs, working arrangements and distribution of power and authority" (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1998, p. 7). Sergiovanni and Starratt (1998, p. 56) have identified six forces that impact on change:

- bureaucratic forces – rules, mandates;
- personal forces – personalities, leadership styles;
- market forces – competition, incentives;
- professional forces – standards of expertise, codes of conduct;
- cultural forces – values, goals, relationships; and
- democratic forces – social contracts, shared commitments.

These forces recognise that the impetus for change can emerge from within the organisation or from outside it (Connolly, Connolly & James, 2000; Razik & Swanson, 1995; Sergiovanni, 1996). They also acknowledge that if change is not embarked on by choice, "the exorable forces of economics and shifts in the external world will force change on us" (Higginson, 1996, p. 80). Change is necessary as success can easily breed complacency that will have less than productive consequences.

While the obvious, observable impact of change will be on the school and its community, change is not only about the creation of new policies and procedures and influencing the structure and culture of communities and groups. Genuine educational change will involve a transformation of the individuals involved (Bennett, Crawford & Riches, 1992; James, 1996)

and the entire context within which they work (Fullan, 2005). Given the reality that school communities are made up of human beings, the change agent leading the process (usually the school principal) must ensure that the changes will continue to serve the needs of students and be mindful of the values of justice and participatory democracy (James, 1996); will take into account the fact that change involves feelings and emotions (Hede, 2003); and avoid feelings of alienation (Oliver, 1996). Real change “represents a serious personal and collective experience characterised by ambivalence and uncertainty” (Fullan, 1991, p. 32) for those involved.

The most important factor in the change process is people (Spitzer, 2000). In order to change people’s behaviour, “you need to create a community around them, where ... new beliefs could be practical, expressed and nurtured” (Gladwell, 2000, p. 173). There will be resistance from some of the people as this is a normal, and even beneficial, aspect of the process (Snowdon & Gorton, 1998; Wagner, 2001). The resistance should be acknowledged, with voices and opinions of the resisters being heard and responded to (Block, 1993; Wagner, 2001) as part of the educational change effort. Another important factor of the effort is that it requires the conjoint efforts of families and the school (David, 1990; Florian, Hange & Copeland, 2000; Fullan, 1991).

Planned change in schools, as in other organisations, usually begins with finding out what the customers value, and how well the organisation is living up to what is valued. In order to establish this, it is necessary to involve all stakeholders in the discovery process (Block, 1993). This is necessary because a primary responsibility of educational leaders is to respond to the needs of a variety of stakeholders: students, teaching and support staff, parents and families, district authorities, and the community at large (Starratt, 2004). If change attempts are to be successful, individuals and groups must find meaning concerning what should change, as well as how to go about it. (Fullan, 2005).

Before selecting a school improvement strategy or innovation, school communities should undertake “some form of evaluation, review or needs assessment” (Hopkins et al., 1994, p. 79) and should collect a variety of school-based data. The objective is for the school community to work through a suite of materials that will assist them to evaluate themselves honestly, yet not have a process that is over-prescriptive (Miliband, 2004). The community should extend its knowledge base beyond the school site to be informed as to what conditions outside the school



are necessary to generate and assist the process (Reynolds, 1993). These outside conditions, combined with the three dimensions of schooling - (i) the formal, reified, organisational; (ii) the cultural and informal; and (iii) personal relationships - determine a school's effectiveness (Reynolds, 1990).

During the 1990s, educational accountability shifted its focus to outcomes (O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998), but it is argued that this focus does not take account of such important factors as the social mix of students (gender, ethnicity, race, social class, disability etc.), peer cultures, school ethos, and emphasis on teaching and learning (Thrupp, 1999). The narrow range of outcomes does not take into account the 'value adding' that takes place in schools. Furthermore, context factors over which the school has no control, influence the school's organisation, curriculum and teacher expectations which, in turn, influence student outcomes on which a school's effectiveness or otherwise is judged (Thrupp, 1999). It is therefore conceivable that a school could achieve the required results to justify its claim as an effective school, but not be regarded as such because of context factors such as low socio-economic area, unemployment and the like. There is evidence to support the claim that when a school is regarded as poorly achieving, the situation becomes worse as families choose to attend other schools which are perceived to be more successful (Waslander & Thrupp, 1995; Woods, Levacic & Hardman, 1999).

International studies have found that parental choice allows *white flight* (Kirp & Cyrus, 1995; Waslander & Thrupp, 1995) from schools with a high racial mix. This refers to the practice of white middle class families moving from a school to a preferred school, therefore changing the racial mix at the original school. This encourages segregation based on religion and ethnicity, and ghettoism on the basis of class (Anyon, 1997; Dent & Hatton, 1996; Waslander & Thrupp, 1995). This does nothing to help the cause of the poorer schools and encourages schools to target students who will achieve (Woods et al., 1999).

A structured process which involves and acknowledges the expertise of staff members in a participative process is beneficial to the school leader as he/she is often sufficiently removed from some of the day-to-day situations as to make his/her solutions to situations impractical (Oliver, 1996). It is also beneficial as it may help prevent the endemic resistance to change that occurs when decision makers exclude the key stakeholders, thus creating tension between those

who make the policy and those who are expected to implement it (Watkins, 1995; Wood, 1994). It is also wise to use a structured process as the vehicle to achieve organisational effectiveness, giving recognition to the fact that all processes within an organisation are inter-related and changes in one part of the organisation will inevitably affect all other parts (King, 1999; Peeke, 1994).

Because of the changing nature of market forces, competing goals and the constant search for understanding, it is inevitable that the process of change is ongoing, involves a degree of instability and has no ultimate answer (James, 1996; Leigh, 1994; Stacey, 1992). Schools must continue to monitor their change processes to avoid both over control and chaos (Fullan, 1997), while being mindful that, for change to occur, those involved must be able to recognise inter-relationships and see a strengthening of vertical relationships (Fullan, 2005) rather than linear cause-effect chains. Clear processes and directions, rather than snapshots of change, engage and motivate people (Senge, 1990).

It is necessary for discernment to be undertaken so that there is a distinction made between which changes are vital and necessary, and those which are trivial and faddish (Higginson, 1996). However, “to not engage in change for fear of making a mistake, would be the biggest mistake of all” (Wagner, 2001, p. 19). Providing support for those implementing the change, while creating a condition for change to occur when people are ready, is important (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1998; Wagner, 2001). This is important because changing schools is about changing cultures and the contexts within which people work; a process that is never easy (Fullan, 2005; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1998).

One such approach that began in 1997 as a result of communications between Education Queensland’s School-based Management Unit and the University of Southern Queensland (USQ) Leadership Research Institute is *IDEAS* (Chesterton & Duignan, 2004).

### **3.3.6 Initiating, Discovering, Envisioning, Actioning, Sustaining: *IDEAS***

*IDEAS* is a process in which the professional community of the school engages in collaborative learning in order to enhance the school’s approach to teaching and learning and to heighten the integration of teaching and learning with the school’s vision, values and infrastructures (Education Queensland, 2001, p. 37). It is:

- a process for positioning schools for the future;
- a process of enhanced learning outcomes by valuing the work of teachers and their classrooms; and
- a process that enables alignment between the work of teachers in classrooms and the school's strategic purposes (Andrews, 2002).

*IDEAS* is underpinned by the concepts of:

- the *Research-based Framework for Enhancing School Outcomes*;
- teacher leadership and parallel leadership;
- the process of professional inquiry; and
- school-wide pedagogy (Chesterton & Duignan, 2004).

The principles of *IDEAS* are:

1. teachers are the key;
2. professional learning is the key to professional revitalisation;
3. success breeds success;
4. alignment of school processes is collective school responsibility; and
5. no blame (Andrews, 2002).

The process is based largely on the Catholic School Renewal (CSR) process as implemented by Queensland Catholic schools (Crowther, 2005) and is conceptualised into five phases:

- ***Initiating*** – establishing facilitation, management and recording processes and responsibilities for the process;
- ***Discovering*** – collecting information (gathering data) to identify the school's most successful practices and key challenges. This involves professional conversations, using diagnostic inventories to scan the school environment, and making shared meaning of the data gathered;
- ***Envisioning*** – determining what the school could and wants to be like. This involves developing or reviewing a vision statement, exploring values underpinning the vision, and developing a school-wide pedagogy statement that draws on successful practices and is consistent with the vision;
- ***Actioning*** – creating a tripartite action plan. The plan comprises pedagogical, governance and management planning that will explicate what teachers, parent representatives and school administration need to do to achieve the school vision and to implement the agreed school-wide pedagogy; and
- ***Sustaining*** – assessing progress arising from the action plan and seeking ways of further developing and aligning successful practices (Chesterton & Duignan, 2004).

*IDEAS* is supported internally by a facilitator selected by the school staff who is advised by an *IDEAS* School Management Team (ISMT), and supported externally by the University of Southern Queensland (USQ), usually in the form of regular visits to the school and though

teleconferences. The process is very similar to the CSR process implemented in the Rockhampton diocese as displayed in Table 3.1:

**Table 3.1 Relationship of *IDEAS* to Catholic School Renewal**

IDEAS	Catholic School Renewal
Initiating	Initiation
Discovering	Examination
Envisioning	Reflection and Clarification
Actioning	Action
Sustaining	Review

IDEAS does not, however, draw on the expertise of an External EVT nor does it use cultural characteristics as an organiser.

A recent evaluation of the *IDEAS* project (Chesterton & Duignan, 2004) concluded that the implementation of *IDEAS*:

- has a positive impact on teachers;
- has not yet proven to improve learning outcomes for students;
- has contributed to greater involvement by teachers in decisions related to developing a vision and generating school-wide pedagogy; and
- can be customised to fit the particular context of a different state system, educational sector, or school.

The evaluation also stated that the concept is consistent with current thinking and research in the area of school leadership, and that it is the only program of its kind in terms of its emphasis on shared leadership and the degree to which it emphasises teachers as leaders of school-wide pedagogical improvement (Chesterton & Duignan, 2004). *IDEAS* does not, however, consider the issues which are identified by the cultural characteristics of CSR, as implemented in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton. These are:

- Community of Faith
- Religious Atmosphere
- Relationships
- Parental and Community Involvement
- Leadership
- Curriculum Outcomes

Another approach which some have claimed might be useful when applied to school settings is Total Quality Management (TQM) (Collins, 1995; Hough, 1994; McNaught, 1997).

### **3.3.7 Total Quality Management**

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a business philosophy for achieving change. Its theoretical foundations were proposed by W. Edward Deming, Joseph M. Juran and Philip Crosby in the US and Genichi Taguchi and Kaoru Ishikawa in Japan (Kwan, 1996; Paine, Turner & Pryke, 1992; Scholtes, 1994). TQM was responsible for the outstanding success of the post-war economic reconstruction of Japan (McNaught, 1997). Deming “told them to find out what their customers wanted, then study and improve their product design and production process until the quality of the product was unsurpassed“ (Scholtes, 1994, p. 13).

It is possible to apply the concepts and principles of *TQM* to educational environments (Earnshaw, 1996), being mindful that there are many definitions and interpretations of the concept. MacDonald’s (1993) definition is that TQM is about delighting the customer by continuously meeting and improving upon agreed requirements. The *Total* in Total Quality Management refers to everyone in the organisation being involved. *Quality* is less easily defined, but must be measurable (Deming, 1992) and “should be aimed at the needs of the customer, present and future” (Deming, 1986). *Quality* has been described as meeting the requirements (Oakland, 2000); conformity to requirements set by the consumers (Crosby, 1984); and fitness for use by the customer (Juran, 1989). Whichever definition is preferred, it must be representative of the needs of the customer and must ensure “customer satisfaction as well as continuous improvement” (Kwan, 1996, p. 25). It must also be translated into plans, specifications and delivery of products (Deming, 1992).

When applied to education, the use of the term brings with it general agreement on certain values that are generally accepted by those who use it (Chapman & Aspen, 1997). In an educational setting, this leads to the question of what comprises the product. It is generally acknowledged that the answer to this question is curriculum and its delivery (Earnshaw, 1996).

The TQM process involves:

1. a process of self-assessment which allows an internal appraisal by management

- and staff; this is used as a measurement tool;
2. the formulation of an action plan; and
3. monitoring customer satisfaction by way of a customer feedback process.

TQM requires an open, participative style of management that encourages staff to challenge management. It is not an easy option and requires a long-term strategy (Earnshaw, 1996). Given the particularly long-term nature of TQM, and being mindful that its roots lie within the manufacturing industry, Earnshaw suggests that it is better suited to business than to education. “There seems little doubt that TQM can produce encouraging results in the manufacturing sector: Education, however, is very much different from industry and questions may be raised as to its applicability” (Earnshaw, 1996, p. 145) because:

1. the mission of education is relatively long term with no single indicator, therefore making it difficult to measure effectiveness;
2. teaching and learning is an interactive process and therefore there cannot be a step-wise instruction;
3. schools cannot control the quality of incoming materials (students); and
4. therefore it is difficult to control the quality of outputs (adapted from Kwan, 1996, p. 28).

When TQM is applied to educational organisations it is usually applied to non-pedagogical aspects of the organisation, such as administration and general management functions (Cuttance, 1997) and areas that most closely resemble TQM in business, such as contracting out custodial services and processing orders (Weaver, 1992).

A number of authors recommend TQM as a strategy for dealing with change in schools (Collins, 1995; Hough, 1994; McNaught, 1997, 2000). TQM’s basic tenets of encouraging continuous improvement, emphasising research and valuing the contributions of those involved make TQM appealing as a change process (Carr & Kemmis, 1988; Murgatroyd, 1989; Paine et al., 1992). However, the process does not involve an external audit or evaluation of practices – this could be regarded as an inhibiting factor in its usefulness.

For the purposes of this study, it is suggested that there may be some value in adopting a TQM practice which looks specifically at the administration and management of the school (Cuttance, 1997; Weaver, 1992). These are non-pedagogical functions and it can be argued that these are the driving forces in setting the direction for the school and therefore contain an associated

business focus. However, as the process is really only suited to one aspect of the life of the school, it is not ideal as a change or quality assurance process as a parallel process would need to be in place as well.

Some other theories of organisational improvement that have evolved include Total Quality Control (TQC), Action Research, Best Practice and the Business Excellence Framework (King, 1999; McNaught, 2000). The Australian Quality Council (AQC) advocates that organisations adopt the Business Excellence Framework as a vehicle to achieve change across the whole organisation. The framework has been adapted for use by education systems and schools and has been trialled in Victoria as the Quality Schools Project (Australian Quality Council, 1999; McNaught, 2000). The framework has seven elements designed to achieve best practice:

1. leadership;
2. strategy, policy and planning;
3. information and analysis;
4. people;
5. client focus;
6. process and service; and
7. organisational performance (Australian Quality Council, 1999).

Tools used in the approach to guide participants through a structured research process are:

1. plan a test;
2. carry out the test;
3. study the results of the test; and
4. act on what has been learned (King, 1999, p. 5).

The purpose of this approach is for members of organisations to systematically learn from the results of the test and to make changes to their policies and procedures. These changes will result in changes to their cultures. As is the case with TQM, this approach does not utilise an EVT.

### **3.3.8 School Culture**

Since the birth of the restructuring movement in the late 1970s, there has been a conscious effort to identify and apply the cultural characteristics of effective schools (McGaw et al., 1992). Change has been regarded as a cultural problem (Sarason, 1982) and research has assigned primary importance to what is referred to as either *school culture* or *ethos* (Cook, 1998; Fullan, 2005) because the school improvement literature consistently points to school culture having “a

powerful impact on any change effort” (Halsall, 1998, p. 29). *Culture* has been described as a set of values, attitudes and behaviours which are representative of the school as a whole and should be appreciated as a social phenomenon (Hopkins et al., 1994; Ruddock, 1991). Other definitions of school culture include the following:

- the values, beliefs, behaviours, rules, products, signs and symbols that bind us together (Donahue, 1997);
- the deeper level basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organisation, that operate unconsciously, and that define in a basic ‘taken-for-granted’ way the organisation’s view of itself and its environment (Schein, 1985);
- the total of the inherited ideas, beliefs and knowledge which constitute the shared bases of social action (Handy & Aitken, 1990);
- a series of norms which hold together the organisation’s pattern of behaviour (Schmuck & Runkel);
- the revelation and demonstration of the school community’s “conception of the desirable”; the practice reflects the value preferences and priorities, influences and differences (Campbell-Evans, 1993, p. 106);
- a set of beliefs, values and assumptions that participants share (Page, 1987);
- the way we do things around here (Deal & Kennedy, 1983);
- a set of understandings or meanings shared by a group of people (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1998);
- the values and rituals that provide people with continuity, identity, meaning and significance, as well as the norm systems that provide direction and that structure their lives (Sergiovanni, 1996); and
- the shared values and beliefs in the organisation (Fullan, 2005).

Limerick et al. (1998, p. 168) provide a definition which encompasses most of the elements stated:

... a set of beliefs, assumptions and values shared by a majority of those within an organisation. It is expressed in rituals, ceremonies, images and artefacts, and supported by various structures and systems. It is, in short, a shared field of meaning.

Halsall (1998, p. 29) provides a definition which again mirrors much of what the other authors have stated, but he relates it directly to the teaching profession:

... it is the set of assumptions, beliefs and values that predominate in an organisation, and which operate in an unconscious or semi-conscious way. These are not as intangible as they may first seem. They are often reflected in behavioural regularities, for example, how teachers interact with one another, and how students interact with one another.



After extensive research in Catholic schools in Australia, Flynn (1993) concluded that the most distinctive feature of an effective Catholic school is its outstanding culture, which gives the school its ethos.

For teachers, the culture is the framework around which they construct, legitimate and preserve their professional identities (Benkin et al., 1997). Hargreaves (1995) adds another dimension to the *culture* conversation by suggesting that among teachers, two kinds of cultures have traditionally prevailed. These are cultures of individualism and balkanised cultures, where teachers have worked in self-contained subgroups. The latter includes such groups as year level and subject groupings.

Hargreaves (1992, 1994, 1997) claims that both kinds of culture fragment professional relationships and that schools need to be re-cultured to create collaborative and collegial cultures among teachers and with the wider community. This will help to build the necessary relationships to allow for the impending collective action (Fullan, 1993b, 1998, 2005; Hargreaves, 1991b, 1995) and will involve the wilful involvement of critics and sceptics, who might initially make change efforts more difficult (Hargreaves, 1995). Perkins (2003) maintains that effective cultures are created through strong and progressive interactions and through demanding processes which produce innovative ideas and social cohesion.

A 1989 OECD Report stated definitively that the distinctive culture or ethos of a school profoundly affects student motivation and achievement and that schools in which students perform have ten similar characteristics:

- a commitment to clearly and commonly identified norms and goals;
- collaborative planning, shared decision-making and collegial work in a frame of experimentation and evaluation;
- positive leadership in initiating and maintaining improvement;
- staff stability;
- a strategy for continuing staff development related to each school's pedagogical and organisational needs;
- working to a carefully planned and coordinated curriculum that ensures each student will acquire essential knowledge and skills;
- a high level of parental involvement and support;
- the pursuit and recognition of school-wide values, rather than individual ones;

- maximum use of learning time; and
- the active and substantial support of the responsible education authority (Moran, 2000).

Hopkins et al. (1994, pp. 85-86.) are of the view that “Unless we address the issue of school culture ... there is little chance that the school improvement will be achieved because it is the *culture of the school* that has the potential to improve the quality of student learning”. Therefore, it is essential that the culture of the school is clearly identified prior to attempting to manage change (Bates, 1987).

Hopkins et al. report that “the school’s culture [is] amenable to alteration by concerted action on the part of school staff [and that] the evidence suggested that teachers and schools had more control than they might have imagined ... to change their present situation” (1994, p. 44). This invites the creation of collaborative cultures within the teaching staff to lead to school improvement and educational change (Hargreaves, 1991a, 1992, 1993, 1997; Fullan, 1997; Hopkins et al., 1994). According to Halsall (1998) the main characteristics of collaborative cultures are:

- teachers working with and for each other on a range of tasks;
- voluntarism: collaboration arises from teachers’ views regarding its value to themselves and to the students;
- a collective commitment to the school’s vision, values, purposes and development priorities; and
- leadership roles for, and involvement in planning by, more rather than fewer teachers, and a shared understanding and endorsement of the responsibilities and obligations of different role-holders.

While undertaking the Quality of Education for All (IQEA) project, Hopkins et al. (1994) paid special attention to the relationship between an organisation’s structure and its culture. Hopkins (1995) suggests that the following *management arrangements* are important:

- frameworks that provide the structures which guide actions and within which action occurs – aims, policies, decision making and consultative strategies;
- shared understanding and clarification of different roles within the school and who is responsible for what; and
- ways of working.

Donahue (1997) places great emphasis on the effect that a change of culture can have on the school and argues that once the culture changes, everything changes, stressing the importance of

identifying and managing change. It has been reported earlier that the principal and effective leadership are essential ingredients in the process of change (Bolam, 1993; Department of Employment and Science, 1977; Donahue, 1997; Wohlstetter, 1997). This is also the reality with reference to *cultural change*, as the role of the principal as the central figure in inhibiting or enabling cultural change cannot be over estimated (Ehrich & Knight, 1998; Fullan, 1991). The principal as *authentic leader* (Bhindi & Duignan, 1997) with an articulated *vision* is important to the successful management of change (Campbell-Evans, 1993).

### **3.3.9 Vision**

While it is important that the principal articulate a vision for the school, it should not be a vision formulated in isolation, as a vision created for others is patriarchy and demands endorsement or enrolment, neither of which is conducive to ownership (Block, 1993). Nor should the vision be a vision borrowed from someone else, because when this occurs, no one has ownership of the vision (Fullan, 1993b).

A vision is “an expression of a desired future which encapsulates the over-arching purposes of an organisation” (Halsall, 1998, p. 42). It is important that the school’s vision defines what the school seeks to be, not what it is (Colton, 1985), and that the vision is expressed in such a way that it will inspire and motivate members of the school community to work towards achieving it; this will ultimately lead to school improvement (Duke, 1990).

The articulation of a vision is vital to success (Campbell-Evans, 1993) and, combined with the living out of the vision by the leader, is an essential element of *authentic leadership* (Bhindi & Duignan, 1997). The leader is the *primary engine* in sustaining the vision of the school (Fullan, 2005). This is witnessed by the members of the school community and “breathes a sense of purpose and excitement into the routines of daily life” (Duignan, 1987, p. 211).

A structured approach to change provides a vehicle which enables people’s beliefs and values to be shared to help create a vision of what can be achieved in an organisation (McNaught, 2000). Followers do not merely accept a vision, but should be a part of its creation (Louis & Miles, 1992) as a vision “is not worth a great deal as long as it remains the private preserve of a single individual” (Owen, 1999, p. 64). Spitzer (2000) suggests that if you are the only one excited by the vision, you are likely to be the only one moving towards it.

Maden and Hillman (1996) offer the following as some documented ways in which visions originate:

- particular histories of long-standing aims;
- responses to particular dramatic events;
- responses to particular local circumstances; and
- change in personnel.

Block (1993) and Limerick et al. (1998) introduce the concept of *mission*, proposing that the *mission* of an organisation is the ongoing established vision, and therefore goes hand in hand with vision, but is perhaps more directed than vision (Limerick et al., 1998). If this concept is accepted, it is not considered necessary for each person to share a common vision, as long as they have a common mission (Block, 1993).

Add to this the essential elements of a sense of culture, an articulated vision and authentic leadership of the school and the scene is set to achieve change.

### **3.3.10 Summary**

In this section, an overview of the concept of school restructuring has been provided, specifically:

- 3.3.1 Effective Leadership by the Principal
- 3.3.2 The Role of the Regional Supervisor of Schools and the System Office
- 3.3.3 Teacher Leadership
- 3.3.4 Authentic Educational Leadership
- 3.3.5 Planned Educational Change
- 3.3.6 Initiating, Discovering, Envisioning, Actioning, Sustaining: *IDEAS*
- 3.3.7 Total Quality Management
- 3.3.8 School Culture
- 3.3.9 Vision

It is recognised that, as a living system, the school is self-renewing and self-organising (Oliver, 1996; Sungaila, 1995; Wheatley, 1992, 1999). It is also acknowledged that the context in which the school exists and the needs of its clients are always changing (Bradley, 1993; O'Donoghue

& Dimmock, 1998). The changes associated with the above should be deliberate and positive and, because schools are part of the community, should be connected with the wider community (Bolam, 1993; Hargreaves, 1994; Starratt, 2004).

There is, however, a contrary body of literature that has reported that community involvement is not conducive to change efforts and that community involvement can be an inhibiting factor in change efforts (Firestone, 1989; Firestone & Fuhrman, 1998; Marsh, 2000; Spillane et al., 1995).

The need for planned change has been recognised worldwide for almost thirty years, during which time attempts have been made to improve the quality of schools (Holly, 1990). The primary purpose of all school improvement efforts is to improve results at the classroom level. The similarities between the unrelated attempts around the world are surprising (O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998).

Local communities are more involved in the direction taken by their schools than they have ever been in the past (Blackmore, 1999; Hopkins et al., 1994) and, therefore, the school communities must be provided with both a process (Blackmore, 1999) and effective leadership (Department of Employment and Science, 1977). Effective leadership is usually provided by the principal (Fullan, 1991; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990; Sammons et al., 1997; Snowdon & Gorton, 1998; Wohlstetter, 1997). It is also necessary that the school identify and declare its values, purpose and virtues (Sergiovanni, 1992) before undertaking some form of evaluation, review and needs assessment (Hopkins et al., 1994), gathering of data, and awareness of outside influences on the school (Reynolds, 1993), prior to selecting a school improvement strategy to suit the specific needs of the school.

The literature warns that the current focus on academic outcomes provides too narrow a focus and ignores many factors, such as social class and ethnicity, over which the school has no control (Thrupp, 1999). Furthermore, the problem may become compounded as families choose to attend other schools which are perceived to be more successful (Thrupp, 1999). Given that parents are making choices based on their perceptions of the quality of schools (Anyon, 1997; Dent & Hatton, 1996; Waslander & Thrupp, 1995), the benefits and pitfalls of TQM being applied to schools were considered.

TQM involves all members of the organisation endeavouring to attain measurable requirements (Deming, 1992; Oakland, 2000) in the area of the core business of the school - curriculum (Earnshaw, 1996). The process involves self-assessment, followed by the formulation of an action plan which monitors customer satisfaction by way of feedback (Earnshaw, 1996). TQM is a long-term strategy which encourages staff to challenge management. In Chapters 5 and 6, feedback will be provided with regards to how Catholic school community members respond to the notion of challenging the management, and how the management (Diocesan Catholic Education and school leadership) are perceived to respond to such challenges. The literature suggests that TQM can be valuable if applied to the administration and management function of the school (Cuttance, 1997), referred to in Chapter 2 as the *Organisation and Administration Cultural Characteristic of the Catholic School* (Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland, 1986).

The Business Excellence Framework (Australian Quality Council, 1999), trialled in Victoria as the Quality in Schools Project (Australian Quality Council, 1999), was put forward as another possible vehicle of change which allows the organisation to learn from test results and make changes accordingly.

This section investigated the interrelated concepts which are integral to school restructuring - change, culture and vision. A number of definitions were listed to describe culture, with the common thread being that values, beliefs, norms and behaviour constitute the culture of a school (Campbell-Evans, 1993; Donahue, 1997).

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, it is necessary for schools to identify culturally at a number of levels including local, national and global (McGaw, 1997). In order to allow for improvement and change, it is also important that the culture be collaborative (Fullan, 1997, 2005; Hargreaves, 1991a, 1992, 1993, 1997; Hopkins et al., 1994).

The leader, usually the school principal, needs to display authentic leadership (Bhindi & Duignan, 1997) as he or she is responsible for enabling cultural change (Ehrich & Knight, 1998; Fullan, 1991; Halsall, 1998) and for expressing a vision for the school (Colton, 1985; Fullan, 2005). With a clear understanding of the school's culture, and a vision of what the school seeks to be (Colton, 1985), the school is able to manage planned educational change.

Throughout the literature there is agreement that change is both necessary and certain (Handy & Aitken, 1990; Oliver, 1990; 1996; Sungaila, 1995). Distinctions are established between quiet and routine changes and monumental changes (Fullan, 1991). All change should be part of a process and not just a snapshot (Senge, 1990). This latter point is addressed further in Chapter 5 with reference to the responses of some interview participants who view the CSR Process as a *snapshot* of what happens in the school and, therefore, not a true reflection of the school.

### **3.4 School Restructuring: A New Paradigm**

Wheatley (1997) describes the old paradigm of organisations as viewing them in mechanistic terms as collections of replaceable parts capable of being reengineered. Further, she claims that organisations are cluttered with control mechanisms that paralyse both employees and employers and that these control mechanisms derive from fear of one another, of a harsh competitive world, and of the natural processes of growth and change that confront people daily. Wheatley further asserts that there is some good news - that self-managed teams are far more productive than any other form of organising people; that people organise together to accomplish more, not less:

Every living system seeks to create a world in which it can thrive. It does this by creating systems of relationships where all members of the system benefit from their connections. This movement toward organisation, called self-organisation in the sciences, is everywhere from microbes to galaxies ... Organisation is a naturally occurring phenomenon (Wheatley, 1997).

Looking at organisations as machines denies them their great self-organising capacity and the reality that organisation and change (order) occurs from the inside out; organisational change does not occur when people attempt change from the outside in. Leading a self-organising system requires a great deal of trust in the people who are a part of the organisation, a trust that they will make changes that are beneficial to their locality, while being mindful of the part they play in the larger organisation. It is therefore necessary that people in the organisation are in a continuous conversation about what the organisation is and where it is going and where each of its members fits within the organisation. Organisations that are clear at their core hold themselves together because of their deep congruence (Wheatley, 1997).

Consequences of accepting that organisations are self-organising systems are (a) to accept and tolerate unprecedented levels of ‘messiness’ at the edges (Wheatley, 1997) and that (b) to accept “the chaotic phase of the change process is a necessary phase of purposeful disorder through which a system of organisation must evolve if it is to metamorphose into new order” (Sullivan, 1999, p. 408). There is a recognition that nothing is fixed and that everything is capable of changing over time. Wheatley asserts that a different worldview is needed to guide us in this new world of continuous change and intimately connected systems that reach around the globe (Wheatley, 1999).

During the course of the last decade, with the assistance of computer technology, chaos theory has emerged and transformed the scientific interpretation of system dynamics. System dynamics is the study of shifts in structure, function, relationship, process and direction, and is interpretive because the school as a social system is understood from many vantage points (Briggs & Peat, 1990; Sullivan, 1998).

### **3.4.1 Chaos Theory**

Searching for a new way of interpreting organisations, Wheatley turned to science and in particular the science of chaos. In 1992 she published her seminal work, *Leadership and the New Science: Learning about Organisation for an Orderly Universe*. Her opening sentence is, “I am not alone in wondering why organisations aren’t working well” (Wheatley, 1992, p. 1). By the second page she had discovered:

This was a world where order and change, autonomy and control were not the great opposites that we had thought them to be. It was a world where change and constant creation signalled new ways of maintaining order and structure (Wheatley, 1992, p.2).

Her book is a journey through her discovery of the new science and makes the following key assertions:

1. Order emerges out of chaos.
2. Information informs us and forms us.
3. Relationships are all there is.
4. Vision is an invisible field.



5. In order to survive in a world of change and chaos, it is necessary to:
  - a) accept chaos as an essential process by which natural systems, including organisations, renew and revitalise themselves;
  - b) share information as the primary organising force in any organisation;
  - c) develop the rich diversity of relationships that are all around us to energise our teams; and
  - d) embrace vision as an invisible field that can enable us to recreate our workplace and our world.

A discussion of Wheatley's assertions follows.

#### **3.4.1.1 Order Emerges Out of Chaos**

In exploring *Order emerges out of chaos* Wheatley (1992) stresses that problems are a necessary part of the evolutionary process, and not a hindrance to be eradicated. In natural systems, order is not imposed from without; it emerges from within. Long term predictions are impossible; however the science of chaos explains that over time an order does emerge without predictability.

In a world where control is seen as necessary, chaos has traditionally been feared as it has been seen to represent a loss of control and being in control is seen as necessary. Proponents of chaos theory assert that it is not possible to reach feelings of peace and greater creativity without a willingness to surrender to chaos and accept it as a part of the process by which life creates new levels of order and understanding. "Organisations are in continuous evolutions. Once a change takes place, the system is never the same again" (Sullivan, 1999, p. 412). Sullivan asserts that:

The science of chaos tells us that signs of disorder might be signs that the system of education is healthy and on its way to a much improved new order. The strategy to be adopted is to positively ride the crest of such dynamics, making small adjustments on the way and eventually achieving a renewed and improved system of education (1999, p. 422).

There is a need to reach agreement on what is to be achieved and the operating values. People must be emancipated to utilise the vast array of behaviours at their disposal to achieve desired

outcomes. Paramount to this concept is that chaos is a critical process by which natural systems renew and revitalise. Chaos needs to be worked with, not shut down.

#### **3.4.1.2 Information informs Us and Forms Us**

An organisation must have abundant access to information as it is the source of all change and provides growth. A living system is the result of information and can be understood as information that has taken material form. Information is the organising force of the universe.

Wheatley (1992) asserts that information is the lifeblood of an organisation and that organisations therefore need it flowing through the system in order to survive. Information is the source of energy that leads to reorganisation and adaptability. If the flow of information is blocked, the organisation no longer has the ability and potential to adapt to its environment and to act and react. There is great value in bringing people together from different parts of the organisation as this creates new information.

#### **3.4.1.3 Relationships are all there is**

At the very foundation of the universe are not building blocks, but relationships. As particles do not exist independently of their relationship to one another, nor do human beings. Wheatley (1992) asserts that each individual is a wave of potential moving through the space of organisations, and that when the individual meets up with another person, event or thought it evokes something and brings forth potential. Relationships are not just important, but are the very foundation of the organisation, the fabric of the team. No individual can do it alone.

#### **3.4.1.4 Vision is an Invisible Field**

This concept recognises that there is a power and an energy hidden in the invisible fields surrounding individuals who may not always see it, but can feel it. Individuals are able to acquire a sense of vision of the organisation; they are able to take ownership of it. Individuals perceive what is happening in the whole rather than in a small part of the organisation. This sense of the whole, combined with the sense of capacity, purpose and dreams for the organisation that the individual has, begins to influence an individual's behaviour.

Vision emerges from the interaction, good thinking and good hearts of the people in the organisation (Kane, n.d.).

### **3.5 School Restructuring: An International Perspective**

For almost forty years, there has been a major focus in western countries on decentralisation in education. Much of this has been referred to as the *education reform movement*, and has been taking place in the United States, Canada, England and Wales, Scotland, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong and elsewhere. The rationale for, and nature of, the decentralisation varies from country to country, as does the terminology used to describe it. Some of the terms used are *school-centred management*, *school-site management*, *local management*, *school autonomy*, *shared governance*, *delegated budgeting* and *school-based management*. While each of these terms refers to a different approach, the common element is that they are all associated with planning and budgeting decisions in education (Boyle, 1999).

In most situations, the term *school-based management* is used generically to describe a concept which has witnessed the devolution of funds and administrative responsibilities to schools. These funds and administrative responsibilities had formerly been held at the central, regional or district level (Boyle, 1999). Site based management in the decentralised systems of the USA and the UK has produced different responses to the versions of self-governing schools from those in the highly centralised Australian and New Zealand systems (Blackmore, 1999). The pattern of educational devolution throughout the world is not uniform, but there are remarkable similarities (Boyle, 1999; O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998).

At the same time as advocates of the devolution process are praising its ability in terms of more autonomy at the local level, more local control and self management, there appears to be a parallel agenda which is attempting to re-centralise through the formulation of guidelines, frameworks and tighter overall policy for the operation of schools (Boyle, 1999). “Incremental creep” (Burke, 1997, p. 47) is when systems which espouse the rhetoric of school-based management return to centralised power over time.

Advocates of school-based management suggest that it provides better programs for students as resources are supplied locally to meet local needs, and that better decisions are made because

they are made by groups at a local level, rather than by geographically isolated individuals. These advocates are also of the opinion that the quality of school management and communication among all stakeholders is better (Cheng, 1996; Sharpe, 1996).

However, there is a body of research to the contrary which states that school-based management does not accomplish any substantial change in either the provision of education or the educational outcomes for students, and that school-based management is no panacea and, when poorly implemented, is simply an added burden for teachers (Australian Teaching Council, 1995; Crowther, 1997; Hanushek, 1996; Limerick et al., 1998; Newman & Whelage, 1995; Summers & Johnson, 1995; Townsend, 1999). Peterson (1991) suggests that school councils are actually controlled by school principals, with other members taking on traditional passive roles.

A number of barriers to the successful implementation of school-based management have been identified. They include a lack of knowledge of the concept and therefore how it works, a lack of decision-making skills, ineffective communication, and a lack of trust among stakeholders combined with statutes, regulations and union contracts (Burke, 1997; Caldwell, 1996; Johnston & Hedemann, 1994). There is also a suggestion with reference to government-controlled schools, that teachers resist educational reforms imposed by politicians because the politicians come from an economic not an educational perspective. Further, the politicians are regarded as having a poor understanding of what schools do and how they work (House, 1998).

Teachers have generally been excluded from having input into educational reform, their hours of work have been expanded and they have lost control of the curriculum. Due to a lack of reflection and consolidation, teachers and principals have lost energy and enthusiasm (Blackmore, 1999) and feel powerless and alienated (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1998).

Wohlstetter (1997) and Boyle (1999) believe that it is unfair to expect a gain in student achievement as school-based management practices are often only a governance reform. If this is the case, school-based management would alter the balance of power in the school, but would not have an impact on pedagogy and consequently student results and achievement would be unchanged.

Of major concern to many school-based management researchers is the area of equity. Research has shown that the very nature of the exercise, and the built in practice of competition rather than cooperation, dictate that in order for one school to flourish, another will fail (Bullock & Thomas, 1997; Levacic, 1995; McGaw, 1997; Waslander & Thrupp, 1995). The research (Fitzclarence & Halpin, 1997; Gewirtz, Ball & Bowe, 1995; Lauder, 1994; Levacic, Woods, Hardman. & Woods, 1998; Townsend, 1996; Whitty, Power & Halpin, 1998; Woods et al., 1999; Wylie, 1997) indicates that:

- structural devolution has not improved student learning outcomes;
- increased school autonomy increases efficiency but not effectiveness;
- system driven priorities dominate over school priorities;
- devolution increases teacher, principal and parent workload, but does not necessarily increase their influence in policy;
- parental choice is exercised largely by those with money and mobility;
- devolution exacerbates existing educational inequality between schools;
- parental 'voluntary' contributions increase; and
- local flexibility is increasingly reliant on voluntary contributions.

Other evidence suggests the need for caution and less haste. Less than ten percent of UK schools have left the Local Education Authorities (LEAs) to become grant maintained, New Zealand Boards of Trustees have rejected the concept of employing teachers and less than one percent of American school children are in the charter schools (Blackmore, 1999).

### **3.5.1 England and Wales**

During the past twenty years, there have been extensive changes taking place in educational reform in the United Kingdom (as there have been in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Hong Kong and the USA). These reforms have placed an emphasis on accountability and school improvement, while decentralising the management of decision-making to schools, and centralising the management of curriculum and monitoring of educational standards to LEAs (Boyd, 1992; Hopkins, Ainscow & West, 1994; Levacic, 1995).

The main themes of reform in England and Wales were underpinned by the concepts of markets, competition and accountability (Thomas, 1993) with quality judged against set standards. The 1988 Education Act was aimed at increasing competition between schools and allowing more parental choice for schooling options, while simultaneously reducing public expenditure and challenging producer and public interests. Quality, standards and the measurement of

performance became the central elements of a national strategy aimed at ensuring compliance to national goals. In 1992, the Education Schools Act further reinforced the quality and accountability agenda which had introduced a strong school accountability process (Kogan, 1993; Riley, 1993, 1994; Riley & Rowles, 1997).

The structure of the LEAs is that the Department for Education and Employment is the government department responsible for education. A Standards and Effectiveness unit sets national targets for school improvement, and the Qualification and Curriculum Authority produces information and advice and has responsibility for regulating and organising qualifications. The Office for Standards in Education (OfSTED) is responsible for ensuring a strong school accountability process based on an evaluation of a school's performance by a school review team (Hart, 2000). The school review teams are comprised of people from outside the school community who are the practitioners of the nationally controlled inspection regime which ensures that every school is inspected at least once every four years. Those involved in the inspection are:

- a Reporting Inspector who is trained and registered as an inspector with *OfSTED* and who has experience as a senior school manager;
- Team Inspectors who are also trained but act as team members in this case, not as Reporting Inspectors. Their role is to gather evidence for the Reporting Inspector;
- a Lay Inspector who has no direct experience of school management;
- the Head Teacher who has full responsibility for the school's internal management of the inspection;
- Deputy Heads, Heads of Department and Curriculum Coordinators who are assigned specific duties and/or are clearly briefed; and
- the Chair of Governors who meets with and provides information to the inspectors, and subsequently receives and responds to the final report (Clegg & Billington, 1994).

The inspection arrangements came into force in September 1994 and at the time were designed to raise educational standards and:

... to separate those services designed to support, advise and develop schools from those designed to inspect them ... The purpose [was] not to support and advise, [but] to collect a range of evidence, match the evidence against a statutory set of criteria, arrive at judgments and make those judgments known to the public ... not designed to help individual schools to do a better job, they are designed to come to a judgment about the quality of the job they are already doing (Clegg & Billington, 1994, p. 53).

Prior to the inspection, schools are responsible for gathering, collating and presenting information with the criteria for evaluation being quite explicit. The principal and the inspectorate negotiate entry to the school by the inspection team which monitors the life of the school by observing lessons, and interviewing all staff and some parents and students. The inspection team follows up by writing a report which is presented to the staff of the school, parents, the local press and local employers. The team remains at the school for a period of time, during which its members consult with the staff of the school and engage in developmental work arising from the diagnostic reports. As a consequence of the report and the developmental work, the school governors are required to prepare an Action Plan for the school. This approach is clearly aimed at curtailing the power of teachers and LEAs (Hopkins et al., 1994; O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998).

If, at the end of the process, a school is deemed to have failed or to be 'at risk', it is given a period of time to improve. If no improvement is forthcoming, the school is taken over by an Education Association. The school, along with every other school in England and Wales, is listed on the *league table*, which ranks schools from the most successful to the least successful according to the process (Riley & Rowles, 1997).

While the aim of ensuring quality has been stated as making sure that public money is spent wisely, it is also about school improvement. School authorities and LEAs agree that while schools should not be left to self-monitor, they are responsible for ensuring school improvement. However, schools and LEAs have struggled to establish a relationship based on partnership. Due to these factors, the focus of OfSTED changed in 1997 and is now stated as:

- being a phase related approach;
- being focused on four main strands for inspection:
  - ⇒ standards of achievement
  - ⇒ quality of education
  - ⇒ efficient use of resources
  - ⇒ spiritual, moral, cultural and social development;
- being focused on benchmarks and standards of good practice;
- referring to pupil progress in relation to prior attainment;
- focusing more on core subjects; and
- paying more attention to special education and equal opportunities (Riley & Rowles, 1997).

A significant drawback of the model has been that teachers have been distracted from teaching because of the enormous pressure placed on them in terms of stress and time while preparing for the inspection (O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998). Another concern is whether "market-like features can coexist with collective action and public accountability combining the dynamism of markets with the public interest in mind" (Giddens, 1994, p. 100). Research indicates that this may not be possible, but that distribution of educational goods on market principles increases the risk for individuals and therefore for inequality across systems (Blackmore, 1999).

While the benefits or otherwise of the *OfSTED* model are open to debate and scrutiny, it is generally accepted that certain conditions are necessary if school improvement is to occur. Schools should collect baseline data against which progress can be measured and interviews should be undertaken and success criteria should be set at the school using the information gathered. For this to happen successfully, school staffs should be given training and support in data collection, developing and measuring success criteria, and evaluation. It is beneficial if the following conditions exist; climate setting, vision building, involvement and empowerment, joint planning and coordination, staff development, problem seeking and solving, monitoring and evaluation and leadership (Hopkins et al., 1994; Stoll & Fink, 1996; Stoll & Reynolds, 1997).

Finally, it should also be recognised that other educational institutions and organisations have an impact on the school and should therefore be factored into the equation when embarking on a school improvement project (Coleman & LaRocque, 1991; Fullan, 1993a; Stoll & Fink, 1996). These institutions include secondary schools and tertiary institutions.

### **3.5.2 The United States**

Given that parents in the United States have traditionally been involved in a highly decentralised education system, restructuring can be regarded as a return to tradition more than something new (Boyd, 1988; Hanson, 1991). The Americans have invited industry to make a contribution to the cost of educational restructuring, suggesting that American industry will eventually benefit from any improvements. To this end, American industry was asked to contribute one hundred and fifty million dollars towards the estimated five hundred and fifty million dollars needed to restructure the American system of education (O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998).



In the United States, the targets of organisational restructuring are the school site, teachers and the school governance system. The operational mechanisms are student or parental choice, teaching strategies and the services provided. Planned changes may refer to specific changes within a school or to more widespread systemic changes (O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998).

United States governments provide general oversight of the school system but because of the decentralised nature of the system (Boyd, 1988; Hanson, 1991), more than fifteen thousand local school districts have been created to organise and operate schools. All states except Hawaii are divided into school districts (Swanson, 1995). The system has a local tax base to fund education, however the state is re-investing more in order to reduce the insecurity caused by local tax revolts (Blackmore, 1999). A perceived drawback of this model is that it allows the school and the individual to ignore less able members of society and their inability to pay for education and thus shift the responsibility away from care of fellow as a public good, to care of self and family (Apple, 1998) - individualism versus the common good.

In 1997 Keefe & Howard declared that "Schools must become self-renewing learning organisations" (p. 1) and that the prevailing approach taken for the past thirty years had been solely diagnostic and prescriptive. They described the steps as comprising:

1. needs and (sometimes) strengths assessment/problem identification and definition;
2. priority setting;
3. action planning/problem solving;
4. implementing, monitoring and modifying the action plans; and
5. impact evaluation and reporting outcomes (Keefe & Howard, 1997, p. 17).

While they acknowledge that such a process can be effective in implementing minor and incremental change, it is unlikely to result in comprehensive change because:

1. the process is basically a negative one;
2. the surveys used to collect data for defining change are typically limited to criteria derived from the school effectiveness literature and thus directed at the school as it is, not how it should be;
3. there tends to be a de-emphasis on successful practices because of the *needs and problems* approach;
4. when problems are solved, they tend to not stay solved because their basic causes are often not addressed; and
5. traditional approaches do not address the systemic nature of organisations as there

tends to be too narrow a focus (Keefe & Howard, 1997, pp. 17-18).

In support of a system's approach to school improvement, Deming has stated that "... optimisation is a process of orchestrating the efforts of all [systemic] components towards the achievement of a stated aim ... Anything less than optimisation of the whole system will bring eventual loss to every component of the system" (1993, p. 53). Therefore, a new comprehensive, design-based approach is proposed. The approach differs from the traditional approach in the following ways:

1. a new design is developed for the school; after that point change is design-driven rather than needs or problem driven;
2. the new design is based on a literature search and other analyses as well as the assessment of the organisation's current state;
3. a strategic action plan is formulated to ensure the design will be realised;
4. the new design is implemented in such a way that all modifications are synchronised. Priorities are set among the specifications; and
5. the evaluation process is both formative and summative (Keefe & Howard, 1997, p. 20).

For school leaders, the advantage of the prevailing approach has been that change has been limited, incremental and only required minor alterations to the status quo. These factors have helped to keep the changes manageable, and therefore school leaders have been able to deal with them. The proposed design-based strategic change approach is long-term, demanding and complex and requires the use of skills which have not traditionally been a part of the principal's repertoire. Consequently, principals and management teams are uncomfortable with it. Formal data collection is essential to the success of the design process, necessitating that the school leaders coordinate the process of collecting data. This is then used in the second phase of information management - analysis and manipulation. School leaders need to be educated and trained in the areas of formal data collection, interpretation and analysis, and manipulation (Keefe & Howard, 1997).

With the information gathered and interpreted, the school leadership must determine the characteristics of the school which are valued and needed to assist the students to become successful and responsible members of society and community. It is suggested that information related to the process can be found in scholarly and research-based literature. Having collected and interpreted the data and completed the literature search, the re-designing function is well

informed, with the emerging design being information-based. This constitutes a self-renewing organisation (Keefe & Howard, 1997) with the final task being to undertake the key activities associated with action planning, implementation and evaluation, namely:

- a) a priority setting workshop;
- b) formation of project implementation/design implementation task forces;
- c) developing task force action plans;
- d) coordinating the work of the task forces;
- e) evaluation of implementation; and
- f) evaluating the impact of school improvement processes on student outcomes (Keefe & Howard, 1997).

### **3.5.3 Hong Kong**

In 1991, the Hong Kong government focused attention on the task of attempting to improve the quality of its education system. The resulting policy is remarkably similar to, and at times mirrors, the policy initiatives introduced in other countries, in particular, England and Wales, Australia and the United States. The main platform on which Hong Kong's school reform is built is entitled the *School Management Initiative* (SMI). It is based on an Australian school restructuring model and is driven by a school effectiveness agenda (O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998).

The SMI contained eighteen recommendations which are grouped under the following headings:

1. New roles and responsibilities for the Education Department;
2. New roles for School Management Committees, sponsors, supervisors and principals;
3. Greater flexibility in school finance;
4. Participation in decision-making; and
5. A framework for accountability.

Among the recommendations were that a staff reporting or appraisal system be introduced and that schools prepare an annual school plan and an annual school profile. There was no recommendation for an inspection regime to be introduced although the scheme was introduced in a voluntary capacity. By 1997, only one quarter of schools had chosen to become involved in the scheme, however many others were implementing policies as a result of the scheme.

Follow-up surveys reported that all member schools had constituted School Management Committees, although there was no evidence of much parental involvement. There was evidence

of systematic planning, although this appears to have been confined to senior staff members. The staff appraisal schemes were causing problems at both conceptual and practical levels for teachers. Other negative findings are similar to those associated with restructuring experiences in other countries, namely an increased workload, coupled with a lack of available time; that the scheme had no effect on the work of teachers at classroom level, and that school personnel felt unsupported by the system (Dimmock, 1995; O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998).

In 1996 the Education Commission published its seventh report which was entitled *Quality School Education* (QSE-ECR7) (Education Commission, 1996). The report continued the trends of SMI and, as is commonplace with restructuring efforts worldwide, added a significantly different dimension. The addition of the extra dimension was acceptable because restructuring is an evolutionary process, not a one-off transformation. The major difference in emphasis between SMI and QSE was that the former was driven by the school effectiveness agenda, whereas the latter was aligned with the notion of quality education (O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998). The main emphasis of QSE-ECR7 is "to develop quality schools possessing quality cultures, and to introduce a framework by which to monitor and assure quality education" (O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998, p 57).

The Education Commission also recognised that problems in the school system centred on a lack of a quality culture and that there was poor support for schools in promoting a quality culture. The Education Commission developed its strategy around thirty-five recommendations which were grouped under six headings:

1. a framework for developing and monitoring quality school education;
2. preparing for quality school education;
3. assessment of performance;
4. incentives to encourage quality school education;
5. school-based management; and
6. funding flexibility.

The major recommendations were associated with the first and third areas, namely that a whole school approach to inspections was advocated and that at a school level, school development

plans, annual budgets and staff appraisal schemes should be institutionalised (O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998).

The quest for effective schools continues in Hong Kong. It has been recognised and accepted that in order to make schools in Hong Kong more effective, the schools need to undergo reform and change, and that each school has its own distinct culture and dynamics. One emphasis of QSE-ECR7 is the necessity for each school to build its own culture. It is believed that the culture of the school is critical in determining its receptivity to change (O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998).

#### **3.5.4 New Zealand**

In July 1987, the New Zealand Labor Government, under the leadership of David Lange, asked prominent businessman and member of the Auckland University Council, Brian Picot, to chair a taskforce to review education administration. The mandate of the taskforce was fourfold:

- to undertake a functional review;
- to evaluate governance;
- to review relationships and services; and
- to conduct a cost-benefit analysis of implementation.

The outcome of the review undertaken by the taskforce was the tabling of the *Administering for Excellence: Effective Administration in Education Report* (Task Force to Review Education Administration, 1988) and the accompanying policy document *Tomorrow's Schools* (Lange, 1988). The report listed a number of faults in the administration of education in New Zealand, namely:

... complexity, over centralisation, lack of information and choice, lack of effective management practices and feelings of powerlessness ... absence of priorities, accountability, the incentive to manage and effective financial planning (Rae, 1998).

The result of the report was the introduction of dramatic and radical changes within the education system (Codd, 1990; MacPherson, 1989; Wylie, 1994) which aimed to increase diversity of opportunity, equity of education provision, to increase the quality of partnership between parents, schools and state and to make changes to funding systems (Billot, 2001). The

reforms abolished the intermediary stages of education administration, radically reduced and restructured the central agency and identified individual schools as the basic building blocks of education administration (Lange, 1988; Tooley, 2001). The reform program embodied traditional social-democratic goals of community participation and egalitarianism, whilst pursuing the market disciplines of efficiency and competition. This combination of democratic and market ideologies is a distinguishing feature of the New Zealand reforms whereby more extensive powers and responsibilities have been allocated to the school-site than anywhere else in the world (Tooley, 2001).

To support the changes, the Ministry of Education developed the National Education Guidelines (NEGs) in 1990, which were revised in 1993 (Billot, 2001). The reforms were based largely on five principles of restructuring:

1. parent and community empowerment;
2. efficient school-site management;
3. strong accountability;
4. contestable provision; and
5. local determination of conditions of employment for principals and teachers (Grace, 1990).

The report proposed that in order to increase the quality of partnerships, a new structure of learning institutions should be put in place, run by a partnership of professionals and local community in the form of elected Boards of Trustees (Billot, 2001). These Boards of Trustees would be free to control their own educational resources and to purchase education services. Each would develop its own charter within overall objectives set by the state. The charter would act as a contract between community and institution, and institution and state (Gibson, 1998).

The report also proposed that an interdisciplinary team, assisted by a co-opted principal and a community representative, should undertake reviews. The tasks of the review team would be to help the institution assess its own progress towards achieving its objectives (catalyst role), and to provide a public audit of performance in the public interest (audit role) (Task Force to Review Education Administration, 1988, p. 60).

A review and audit agency - the Education Review Office (ERO) - was established for this purpose.

Prior to the Picot Report, New Zealand's post Second World War education system had been based on an egalitarian vision which allowed everyone the right to a free quality education (Gibson, 1998). However, both the Treasury and the State Services Commission (SSC) had a significant impact on the development and implementation of the reform program (Codd, Harker & Nash, 1990) which has led to a freeing up of enrolment procedures to create and allow choice in an open market (Rae, 1997). This provision of parental choice was intended to pressure poorer schools into improving. The literature suggests that it has failed to do so (Gibson, 1998; Nash, Harker & Charters, 1990; Wylie, 1997) as this required additional resources that were not forthcoming. The result has been a drift away from low socio-economic schools, resulting in the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer (Gibson, 1998).

The ERO undertakes reviews of all schools in New Zealand, including Catholic schools, on a regular basis. The types of reviews include:

1. Assurance Audits which measure compliance with legislative or regulatory requirements;
2. Effectiveness Reviews that target student achievement; and
3. Accountability Reviews which look at:
  - a) Evaluation Services - national impact evaluation.
  - b) Ministerial Services - briefings, correspondence, speech notes.

The results of the reviews are presented as a public document and are available to the wider community on request (Gibson, 1998; Rae, 1997).

The New Zealand education system integrated Catholic schools during the 1970s. The government pays staff and covers the costs associated with some aspects of building maintenance. The Catholic Church owns school buildings. A Board of Trustees comprised of elected community members runs each Catholic school. It is mandatory for Catholic schools to maintain and uphold their *Special Catholic Character* by teaching Religious Education and celebrating liturgies. As a monitoring device, *Special Character* reviews are undertaken every two or three years in addition to the standard reviews.

In New Zealand, education has historically been “regarded as a form of welfare, providing a means for the development of a society based on equality; today education in New Zealand is a commodity to be traded in a free market situation” (Gibson, 1998, p. 7). Some of the emergent problems associated with the implementation of *Tomorrow’s Schools* (Lange, 1988) have been ongoing industrial unrest; ever-widening resource disparities between schools, excessive workloads, huge tertiary debt, cultural and social polarisation and unfavourable ERO reports. The positives include a reduction in bureaucratisation, greater community involvement and improved accountability procedures (Gibson, 1998).

### **3.5.5 Summary**

In this section I have attempted to provide an international perspective on school restructuring, in particular reviewing the literature which reports on England and Wales, the USA, Hong Kong and New Zealand. The literature suggests that there has been a major focus on educational decentralisation around the world over the past thirty years. Although the concept is referred to by a variety of names depending on geographical location, all are part of the education reform movement and all are associated with planning and budgeting decisions (Boyle, 1999). The pattern of educational devolution is not uniform throughout the world, but there are similarities (Boyle, 1999; O’Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998).

Advocates of school-based management are of the opinion that students benefit because of the local knowledge and input of members of the local community (Caldwell, 1993; Cheng, 1996; Sharpe, 1996). Others are of the view that, when poorly implemented, it is simply an added burden for teachers (Crowther, 1997; Hanushek, 1996; Newman & Whelage, 1995; Summers & Johnson, 1995). A major concern is that competition is encouraged, and, as a result, in order for one school to flourish another will fail (Bullock et al., 1997; Levacic, 1995; McGaw, 1997; Simkins, 1994).

Generally, the experiences of the five countries investigated are remarkably similar (Boyle, 1999; O’Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998). In all instances the reforms have placed an emphasis on markets, accountability, competition, school improvement and parental choice (Boyd, 1998; Rae, 1997; Thomas, 1993). England and Wales, Hong Kong and New Zealand all have an external evaluation team involved in the review processes, although the composition of the team varies substantially (O’Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998; Task Force to Review Education



Administration, 1988). In all instances the team presents a public report (Gibson, 1998; Hopkins & Ainscow, 1993; O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998; Rae, 1997) which is used as the basis for the development of a School Development/Action Plan. As is the case for the systems examined internationally and nationally, the process used in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton utilizes the expertise of an external evaluation team and produces a public report which forms the basis of the School Development Plan.

Some significant differences in the experiences of the four countries investigated are that in England and Wales schools are listed on a league table (Riley & Rowles, 1997), from most successful to least successful according to the outcomes of the inspections. In England and Wales, the government has stated that the reforms are also aimed at reducing the cost of education. The early 1991 SMI in Hong Kong did not include an inspection; this was added after the QSE-ECR7 report in 1996. The SMI also made specific reference to staff appraisal and culture building. The New Zealand ERO undertakes three types of review: Assurance, Effectiveness and Accountability (as well as Special Character Reviews for Catholic schools). As is the case elsewhere, these reports are presented as public documents (Gibson, 1998; Rae, 1997).

The literature suggests that the problems associated with school-based management are common to all countries. Paramount among these are teacher stress, shortage of time, increased workload, industrial unrest, resource disparities and inequality across schools and/or system (Burke, 1997; Caldwell, 1996; Crowther, 1997; Hanushek, 1996; Newman & Whelage, 1995; Summers & Johnson, 1995). Some advantages identified are a reduction in bureaucratisation, greater community involvement and improved accountability procedures (Gibson, 1998).

### **3.6 School Restructuring in Australia**

In May 1973, *Schools in Australia: Report of the Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission* (The Karmel Report) was published by the Commonwealth Government. The publication of the report will long be remembered as a landmark event as it marked the beginning of the educational reform movement in Australia. The report was one of the most influential documents in school education for many years and was to change the face of Australian schools for the first time in a hundred years (Caldwell, 1993). Prior to the report, large bureaucracies had controlled state education; the report recommended decentralising

education. Hallmarks of the recommendations were collaborative school-based decision-making, community involvement and accountability to the local community. Parents were to be involved in decision-making with the aim of promoting equity, equality, social justice and choice (Caldwell, 1993; Marginson, 1997).

The Australian Schools Commission, a Commonwealth Government agency, was confident that increased community involvement would revitalise schooling in Australia and promote *inter alia* increased accountability, a more egalitarian school system, increased motivation for active citizenship and improved learning for children. It was also hoped that devolution would empower disadvantaged groups, generate enthusiasm for schooling, reduce industrial disputation and relate educational programs to local needs (Griffiths, 1998; Sturman, 1989).

The Australian Schools Commission strongly advocated parental involvement as a panacea for the problems of schooling (Griffiths, 1998) and as a way to promote the educational and social good of greater variety among Australian public schools (Australian Schools Commission, 1975). Subsequent Australian Schools Commission Reports developed the concepts of devolution and parental involvement into an argument for pluralism at a local level and for more parental choice regarding schooling options for their children (Griffiths, 1998).

In the following decade (1980s), economic rationalism became the driving force for schooling issues in Australia, as it had in all western countries. The reform movement was redirected by the perception that improved educational standards and outcomes would improve the nation's economic performance. The earlier devolution and school-based decision-making rhetoric was transformed into reality and expanded (Griffiths, 1998) by the realisation that local communities are best suited to make decisions about their schools, as opposed to bureaucrats who are invariably situated in geographical isolation from the schools. The combination of the above factors produced a new model of school governance and management that was adopted by all States and Territories (O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998). In addition, school monitoring and quality assurance, which until that time was comprised largely of a centrally controlled inspection with little opportunity for school input or self-review, was replaced by systems of self-review and external verification (Gurr, 2001). This led to a number of ramifications, summarised by one commentator as:

Pressures on the accountability of the principal have increased from three directions: school councils, staff and students, and from the outside community. Managerial responsibilities have also increased with important authority delegation being transferred from the central system to the school. Some of the concepts that principals have had to grapple with are: quality management, school appraisal, school profiles ... (Moir, 2000, p. 9).

Due to the autonomous nature of the states, some have moved further down the devolution track than others. In Queensland, for example, the public system investigated the concept and rejected it before ultimately returning to it in part. In other states, such as New South Wales, there has been little administrative restructuring despite major restructuring in relation to curriculum and accountability (Blackmore, 1999). The following presents systems of restructuring that have operated in three Australian states and have had the capacity to inform Catholic School Renewal in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton.

### **3.6.1 New South Wales**

In 1989, the New South Wales government launched its official policy entitled *School Renewal: A Strategy to Revitalise Schools Within the NSW Education System* (The Scott Report). The policy was based on the assumption that principals and their staffs know best how to respond to the educational needs of their students. The policy states that within the framework of overall departmental goals, each school should develop its own renewal plan on the basis of its ongoing program of school improvement and professional development (O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998; Scott, 1989).

The main aim of the New South Wales review was quality assurance. This was achieved by focusing on improvement and audits of the school's quality system, its educational practice and functioning. There was a significant element of stakeholder involvement in the school reviews that were comprised of three clearly defined stages:

- 1) The Pre-Review, which had three purposes:
  - i) to provide information on the major steps and aspects of the process;
  - ii) to check the accuracy of the statistical profile; and
  - iii) to negotiate the focus areas.
  
- 2) The Review:
  - i) took place over a period of two to five days in the school;
  - ii) involved interviews, observation and document analysis with a view to forming opinions about the school's strengths and weaknesses; and

- iii) involved the presentation of a preliminary oral report by the visiting team to the school community.
- 3) The Post-Review:
- i) was when the team leader wrote the formal report; and
  - ii) the principal was accountable for implementing the developments (Cuttance, 1997, p. 109).

Some features of the process included the representation of a local community member as one of the three to five team members; the participation through interviews of a significant number of stakeholders - about eighty people were interviewed in a school of 400 primary students; general issues were analysed until a consistent interpretation was available for corroborating evidence; and the recommendations were either incremental or fundamental.

The evidence indicates that school communities found the reviews to be beneficial in terms of validating their achievements and setting direction for their future development and improvement (Cuttance, 1997).

### **3.6.2 Victoria**

The state to have made the best progress towards decentralisation since the Karmel Report is Victoria (Gurr, 2001). As early as 1975, the government of the day passed the *Schools' Council's Amendment to the 1958 Education Act* which gave some responsibility to schools for managing their own finances and facilities, while maintaining the right of the government to advise on policy issues. By the 1980s this had evolved to the point whereby local communities were able to determine school policy and select their own principals.

The 1992 Victorian state election resulted in major changes to education which can be represented as both quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative changes resulted in a substantial downsizing of the educational enterprise. Three hundred schools were closed and the buildings sold, the teaching force was reduced by twenty percent, Education Department Central Office staff was reduced by eighty percent and regional offices and school support centres became almost non-existent. The qualitative response was the *Schools of the Future* program which focused on the self-managing schools concept and is based on a funding contract between the school and the Department of School Education. Individual schools contract with providers

for many of the services which were previously provided by the Department of School Education (Townsend, 1997).

Stated features of the *Schools of the Future* program are:

- the school charter is the school's vision for the future. It is the key planning and accountability document;
- to complement the charter, the authority of school councils as governing bodies has been expanded to include the selection of principals and the employment of other staff;
- each school council reports to the community through a comprehensive annual report focusing on educational achievements;
- an independent school review process that reconsiders and renews charters takes place every three years;
- each school principal selects a teaching team;
- the principal has the responsibility to foster the professional development and personal growth of teachers; and
- the school community decides on the best use of the schools' resources through a one-line global budget that allows for local flexibility (Townsend, 1997, p. 201).

The key elements of the accountability framework are the school charter, the annual report and the triennial school review. Together they form an integrated planning, development and reporting package aimed at assisting schools to monitor and continually improve their performance (Ross & Hault, 1999).

The Charter is "a three year planning document in which schools identify their own educational goals and priorities within government guidelines" (Gurr, 2001), aimed at improving effectiveness by helping to focus on improved student learning.

The Annual Report relies on systematic monitoring of the learning progress of students and evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of the programs in terms of specified goals and priorities. Three types of data are collected, analysed and reported on: data that determines the current standard of student achievement, data on factors that impact directly on student achievement and data that measures aspects that may be considered preconditions to student learning (Gurr, 2001).

The triennial review examines the school's performance over the previous three years against its own stated goals and the Department of Education's policy objectives as stated in the Charter (Gurr, 2001; Ross & Houlton, 1999). The school self-assessment is monitored through an independent external verification process involving an External School Reviewer (Gurr, 2001).

The Victorian experience is unique as the management of the triennial review is outsourced, with the Office of School Review contracting accredited external consultants to undertake much of the process. The Education Department tenders the review verification process to a dozen companies who are invited to submit a quote. As the accreditation process is a function of the Department's Office of Review, only reviewers accredited by the Office of Review can be contracted by the companies.

Having been appointed, the key roles of the reviewer include interpreting the data and adding an external view, followed by negotiating with the School Council the recommendations arising from the review. The recommendations must be incorporated into the goals and priorities of the new charter (Ross & Houlton, 1999).

Not unlike other states and nations, the Victorian system has taken on a market approach whereby parents are considered to be consumers and management is devolved to the school while policy control is centralised. A major downside of the approach is the perception that, rather than schools being encouraged to do well and complement each other, they now compete for students in the open market (Marginson, 1994; Townsend, 1997).

Research indicates that reform in Victoria has not met its promise to respond to diversity, promote community involvement through parental choice, increase school autonomy, raise professional standards or improve student outcomes (Townsend, 1996, 1997, 1999). On the contrary, it has been attributed with dividing many communities and exacerbating the gap between the rich and the poor (Townsend, 1996, 1997, 1999). Further, the additional workload has made the busiest people in the schools even busier (Ross & Houlton, 1999).

Despite these negative findings, Victoria has moved towards the next phase of self-governing schools where school councils employ teachers and partnerships are made with business (Blackmore, 1999).

### **3.6.3 South Australia**

In South Australia, the two *Keeves Reports* of 1981 and 1982 recommended the establishment of a system of school reviews and school development plans (Keeves, 1981, 1982). At the time the recommendations were not acted upon. However, in 1987 *The Report of the Review of Superintendents in the Education Department of South Australia* (The Cox Report) recommended that each school develop a three year school achievement plan and that a quality assurance unit be established to regularly visit schools and assess their school achievement plans.

In 1989 the South Australian Education Department issued a policy statement which described the School Development Plan (SDP) as a statement of the key things which the school wanted to change and improve, how these things would be achieved, and how key things would improve education for students (Cuttance, 1993). The policy statement further stated that the reviews were to be undertaken by teams which drew on the skills of school-based and other staff and that the reviews would enable the dissemination of effective practice among schools. The SDP was a product of the review. Each school undertook an annual internal review of the SDP to assess whether or not there was progress being made with regard to meeting objectives. The intent behind the SDP concept was that the school community would have ownership of the plan and that it would therefore remain the property and intention of the school even if there was a change of principal. The direction of the school was recognised as being bigger than the vision of the principal alone.

The body responsible for undertaking the reviews was called the Education Review Unit (ERU). The composition of the team which conducted the school-based reviews was an ERU superintendent, a community representative, a school principal, one or two school-based teachers and the principal of the school under review.

The review, which took place within four years of the previous review, consisted of an audit of selected regulations and requirements, a consideration of the SDP, and an optional school-initiated component of review. Written reports, which were the joint responsibility of the school principal and the ERU superintendent, focussed on the review of the SDP and the audit of selected regulations and requirements. They highlighted areas of achievement and made recommendations for improvement. The audience for the review report was widespread and

included parents, staff, School Council, Area Director of Education, the Director General and, due to the public nature of the document, any other community member who was interested. It was the responsibility of the school principal to act on the recommendations (Bolam, 1993).

### **3.6.4 Internal School-based Reviews and the School Development Plan**

Across Australia there is an emphasis on school-based self reviews, validated and/or examined by external teams, as the main method of quality improvement, school monitoring (Gurr, 2001) and school development planning. Cuttance (1997, p. 105) offers the following as a blue print for the internal element of the school-based reviews. They:

- are based on a systematic review and evaluation process, and are not simply an exercise in reflection;
- obtain information about a school's condition, purposes and outcomes;
- lead to action on an aspect of the school's organisation or curriculum;
- are a group activity that involves participants in a collegial process;
- are based on processes which provide the school with ownership of the outcomes; and
- have school improvement as their primary objective.

Cuttance (1997) also offers strategies which he considers to be important for building and maintaining quality:

- clear and shared vision of what students are to learn;
- means for translating the vision into a strategic development plan;
- ownership of the vision by all stakeholders;
- action plan for the strategic development plan;
- identification and provision of skills needed to implement the strategic development plan;
- structures and processes to monitor the effectiveness of strategic development plan strategies;
- feedback for the monitoring process;
- annual review and evaluation;
- a commitment to professional development; and
- active community involvement (p. 105).

The SDP is a recurring concept in the context of school restructuring and reform in all of the Australian examples and many international examples (Halsall, 1998; O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998). It is referred to by a variety of names including the Strategic Development



Plan, Action Plan and School Growth Plan (Halsall, 1998; Hopkins & Ainscow 1993; Murphy, 1991; Stoll & Fink, 1992).

It is argued that the efficiency and effectiveness of school development planning is enhanced by the involvement of the local community in making decisions about the school's direction (Dimmock, 1995), although there also exists research findings contrary to this. The decisions are based on the local knowledge of those involved, who will also take into account system guidelines and priorities (Dimmock, 1995). It is believed that by directing the collective energies of the school to matters of local relevance, the quality of educational outcomes can be enhanced. It is also believed that by utilising a collaborative process in school decision-making, accountability to the local community is increased (O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998).

The SDP not only helps the school to organise what it is already doing and what it needs to improve, but it is a way of assisting the school to manage innovation and change successfully. It is a means of drawing together national and local policies and initiatives, the aims and values of the school and its current achievements and plans for future development (Hopkins et al., 1994). The SDP provides direction for the school (Davis, 1999a). Following a review - internal or external - the priorities of the plan may change in light of the recommendations. It is generally accepted that School Development Planning is an important preliminary to school improvement (Hopkins et al., 1994). Hopkins et al. (1994) offer a *Priorities-Conditions-Strategy* model of school development planning as the most likely to be successful. It consists of: the establishment of priorities arising from a review, the creation of internal conditions that will underpin and sustain the change process, and a strategy or set of strategies designed to achieve the priorities and to establish the conditions to support these in order to link the priorities and conditions.

### **3.6.5 Summary**

*The Karmel Report* (1973) marked the beginning of the school reform movement in Australia. The report recommended the decentralisation of education, including collaborative school-based decision-making, accountability to the local community and parental involvement (Caldwell, 1993; Marginson, 1997). The Australian Schools' Commission was confident that increased community involvement would revitalise schooling in Australia and promote, *inter alia*, increased accountability, a more egalitarian school system, increased motivation for active

citizenship and improved learning for children. It was also hoped that devolution would empower disadvantaged groups, generate enthusiasm for schooling, reduce industrial disputation and relate educational programs to local needs (Griffiths, 1998; Sturman, 1989).

In the 1980s, economic rationalism became the driving force for schooling issues in Australia, as it had in all western countries. The reform movement was redirected by the perception that improved educational standards and outcomes would improve the nation's economic performance, and by the realisation that local communities are best suited to make decisions about their schools. The combination of the above factors introduced a new model of school governance and management which was adopted by all states and territories (O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998).

A snapshot of how three state education authorities dealt with restructuring and quality assurance provides a clear indication that general trends and directions were taken. All Australian state education systems have introduced strategic planning over the last few years, mainly in the form of SDPs in most states. The main quality improvement approaches were based around strategic planning and internal monitoring by schools (Cuttance, 1997). However, each of the Australian states referred to in this section had a different approach.

In New South Wales, selected schools developed their own renewal plans on the basis of their ongoing programs of school improvement and professional development (Scott, 1989; O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998) and in-depth reviews of selected schools were undertaken (Gurr, 2001). Each review was undertaken by a team comprised mainly of external people with a degree of local stakeholder involvement. The review included many interviews and concluded with a formal public report (Gurr, 2001; Scott, 1989). The literature reports that the school communities found the reviews to be useful.

Following the 1992 Victorian state election, many changes occurred regarding the governance of education in that state. The initial changes were quantitative and involved the substantial downsizing of the whole education enterprise. Other changes, referred to as *Schools of the Future*, were qualitative and included the expansion of the authority of school councils and an independent school review every three years (Peck, 1996; Townsend, 1997). The practice of the school review process was based around the school charter and annual report (Peck, 1996; Ross

& Hoult, 1999). The review was outsourced, with the Office of School Review contracting accredited external consultants to undertake much of the process.

Unlike the New South Wales experience, the evidence does not point to the process being viewed as beneficial to the school communities. Indeed, because of the nature of *Schools of the Future*, schools are now competing against each other with the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer (Marginson, 1994; Townsend, 1996, 1997, 1999). The Victorian experience resembles the New Zealand model of *Schools of Tomorrow* (Lange, 1988) in a number of ways.

After 1989, the Education Department of South Australia implemented School Development Plans which stated the key things to be done, how they would be done and what impact they would have on the education of the students (Cuttance, 1993). South Australia had an Education Review Unit whose members were charged with the task of undertaking school reviews at least every four years. The focus of the review, in consonance with the Victorian approach, was the School Development Plan. In contrast to the Victorian approach, review teams were comprised mainly of school-based teachers. The end product was a report which was a public document to be acted upon by the school principal (Bolam, 1993).

### **3.7 The Catholic Church's Call to Renewal**

As a result of the Second Vatican Council of 1962-65, sweeping reforms were made in the Catholic Church. Among the Council's many aims was a call to examine, re-prioritise and reorganize ecclesial structures so that they would harmonize with the essential nature of the Church (Arbuckle, 1993). The Council also called the Catholic Church to renew itself through the development of collaborative models that recognised the baptismal responsibilities of the people of God (Flannery, 1996c). If renewal is about engaging in the co-creative task of being and becoming (O'Murchu, 1997) and about challenging existing structures, it can be argued that the Second Vatican Council was an example of contemporary Christian renewal (Spry, 2000).

It is necessary for the Catholic Church to be involved in continual renewal so that it does not allow itself to become blind to its own faults and intolerant of criticism. Continual renewal is necessary also to help prevent the Catholic Church from falling into the trap that often besets organisations - maintaining and protecting themselves, preserving the existing structures and

accumulating wealth and power at the expense of authenticity (Cappo, 1996; Fuellenbach, 1995).

The Second Vatican Council specifically targeted the previously held view that the Catholic Church was able to abjure from permitting genuine and healthy self-criticism and loyal dissent on the grounds of the Church being identified with the Kingdom (Arbuckle, 1993; Flannery, 1996a, 1996b). The Second Vatican Council actually went so far as to suggest quite the opposite:

Before we speak, we must take great care to listen to what people say, but more especially, what they have in their hearts to say. Only then, will we understand them and respect them, and even as far as possible, agree with them (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977, pars. 64 & 67; 1988, par. 38).

The Catholic school is an agency of the universal Catholic Church. As such, its *raison d'être* must be identification with the Catholic Church's mission. The Catholic Church's fundamental purpose and mission is the promotion of the Kingdom of God (Laghi, 1996; McLaughlin 1998, 1999a). As a consequence, so too is the Catholic school's purpose and mission. *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1998) further emphasises that "the fundamental purpose of Catholic schools is to create an educational environment promoting authentic humanity" (McLaughlin, 2000, p. 1), "... a school for the human person and of human persons ... where the promotion of the human person is the goal" (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1998, pars. 8 & 9).

The Catholic school needs to identify its mission and establish the conditions that are necessary to fulfil it. Loyalty to the educational aims of the Catholic school will demand ongoing self-criticism and a return to the basic principles and motives which inspire the Catholic Church's involvement in education (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977). It is essential that authentic Catholic schools possess a predilection for the common good (Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference, 1992) along with a preference to serve the marginalised and those most in need (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1998; McLaughlin, 1999a).

Catholic schools need to guard and nurture their specific identity. Cook (2004) suggests four challenges for Catholic school leaders:

1. to operate excellent schools (with limited resources);
2. to ensure that the Catholic message and vision permeate the school curriculum and cultures;
3. to recruit and retain teachers who understand and promote the Catholic message; and
4. to reconcile the tensions between Catholic school vision and 21<sup>st</sup> Century reality.

In relation to the first challenge, Cook (2004, p. 34) offers the following:

First of all, before they can be anything else, Catholic schools are schools first, **Catholic is not the noun, it is the adjective**. Catholic schools must be good schools before they can be good Catholic schools ... **the Catholic community will not financially support mediocre schools**.

The second challenge is in response to *To Teach As Jesus Did* which clearly articulates that “the integration of religious truth and values with life distinguishes the Catholic school from other schools” (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1972, #105). Cook acknowledges that “School leaders cannot ensure Catholic identity themselves. Teachers are the key” (Cook, 2004, p. 34). He argues that “subject teachers have significant influence on student spiritual formation” (Cook, 2004, p. 34) and therefore suitable teachers should be sought as role models to witness to gospel values.

In relation to his final challenge of reconciling tensions between Catholic school vision and the realities of the world, Cook asks a number of questions which include how to teach Catholic values when the church is in crisis, how to find the middle ground between not Catholic enough and too Catholic and how to explain to girls why they are unable to participate fully in the Church (Cook, 2004).

First and foremost, Catholic schools are accountable to the Catholic Church for the promotion of Christian values. Secondly, they are accountable to parents and caregivers to ensure that children entrusted to their care receive a quality education that develops their academic, spiritual, emotional, physical, social and aesthetic capabilities. The school reports to parents on these matters, thus allowing parents to make judgments about the school’s performance (National Catholic Education Commission, 1998, p. 8).

### **3.7.1 Catholic School Renewal**

It has been proposed that Catholic schools have engaged in processes that are developmental in orientation ever since they were first established (Spry & Sultmann, 1991). It has also been proposed that CSR has been framed as a natural process motivated by the desire and capacity of the Catholic community for change and development (Spry, 2000). It is accepted that as living systems, schools are naturally self-renewing and self-organising (Oliver, 1996; Sungaila, 1995; Wheatley, 1992, 1999). Add to this the reality that in the past the Catholic Church has been accused of idolatry and that the schools have not been immunised against self adulation and a strong argument emerges for renewal to be at the core of the Catholic school's authenticity (Spry & Sultmann, 1994; Treston, 1992).

The Catholic school is a community of people who come together in pursuit of the common goal of providing a Christian education and promoting authentic humanity for its young. CSR presents an opportunity for members of the school community to refocus and renew their consensus about the basic purposes and identity of the school in the light of the Catholic Church's vision and the message of the Gospel (Keane & Keane, 1997). CSR is an opportunity to examine and assess the school's performance, value for money, reliability, competence and so on (Paine et al., 1992). It also provides an opportunity for the school to pursue its constant aim of contact and dialogue with the pupils' families (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1998).

While CSR is a multi-layered phenomenon that can be constructed in a number of different ways, it is also a great opportunity for organisational growth through planned interventions and for educational reform as well as providing an authentic response to the enactment of the reign of God in the world (Spry, 2000). According to an acclaimed academic in the area, "Catholic School Renewal is the most successful form of school revitalisation on the earth" (Crowther, 2005).

Parents also have a right to be involved in the education of their children. The Charter of Rights of the Family asserts that:

The primary right of parents to educate their children must be upheld in all forms of collaboration between parents, teachers and school authorities, and particularly in forms of participation designed to give citizens a voice in the function of the schools and in the formulation and implementation of school policy (1983, par. 5e).

Canon Law (Griden et al., 1985, No. 796) states that:

There must be the closest co-operation between the parents and the teachers to whom they entrust their children to be educated. In fulfilling their task, teachers are to collaborate with the parents and willingly listen to them.

*The Catholic School* (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977, par. 64) states that “loyalty to the educational aims of the Catholic school demands constant self-criticism and a return to basic principles, to the motives which inspire the Church’s involvement in education”. A 1988 Vatican document (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988, par. 39) reaffirms that “The more the members of the educational community develop a real willingness to collaborate among themselves, the more fruitful their work will be”. Further to this documentation, other concerns have been raised from time to time by high profile Catholic Church leaders (Baum, 1983) about the effectiveness and authenticity of Catholic schools.

In 1983, at an International Synod of Bishops held in Rome, Cardinal Baum, Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education, expressed a concern that authentic Catholic schools must not only be schools of high quality, but Catholic schools in the full meaning of the term (Baum, 1983). Five years later, the same concern was articulated (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988) when Catholic school leaders were urged to examine if the Catholic school was achieving its goals as stated at the Second Vatican Council (McLaughlin, 1999b). The same document (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988, par. 39) states, “A willingness to collaborate ... makes it possible to critically evaluate the school”. Accepting this view, *authority dissenters* (Arbuckle, 1993) should not only be tolerated but also encouraged for the sake of the community’s authenticity and continuity (McLaughlin, 1997).

Accepting that a Catholic school’s authenticity is open to critique, it is reasonable to expect that certain characteristics would mitigate against such a critique (Mulligan, 1994). McLaughlin (1999a, pp. 15-16) suggests the following as characteristics of an authentic Catholic school:

- institutionalised structures aspiring to promote an authentic theological and sociological community;
- opportunities for private and meaningful communal prayer and worship;
- collaboratively planned retreats or reflective experiences aimed to nurture students’ and staff members’ (and their spouses’) spirituality;
- a curriculum and resultant structures that reflect Catholic values and teaching,

especially where the common good is honoured even at the expense of individual self interest;

- extra curricula activities which focus primarily on the welfare of all students
- an organised and professionally resourced pastoral care program;
- a privileging of Catholic social teaching expressed in enrolment, termination, discipline, financial, resource, social and celebratory policies, practices and traditions;
- substantial outreach initiatives for the needy, poor and “new poor” and marginalised;
- a leadership that is practiced in stewardship and is characterised by service devoid of self interest, rank without privilege, justice, collaboration, transparency and accountability; and
- an understanding that employment in a Catholic school entails with it a sense of vocation for all and for some an acceptance of a ministry.

A common theme of the Vatican documents regarding Catholic schools since the Second Vatican Council has been the need for a common understanding and vision by all members of the community, aligned with a process for determining whether or not the objectives are being achieved. In 1977, *The Catholic School* (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977) expressed the necessity for all members of the school community to adopt a common vision based on a set of shared values. In the 1982 document, *Lay Catholic in Schools: Witness to Faith* (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1982), it was acknowledged that Catholic schools in Australia are almost completely staffed by the laity (Collins, 1991; Koob, 1984) and that the laity is therefore responsible for determining whether or not objectives are being realised (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1982). In 1988, *The Religious Dimension of Education* extended the concept by expressing that:

If a school is excellent as an academic institution, but does not witness to authentic values, then both good pedagogy and a concern for pastoral care make it obvious that renewal is called for - not only in the content and methodology of religious instruction, but in the overall school planning which governs the whole process of formation of the students (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988, par. 19).

The document later suggests that the educational goals of the school should be revised each year (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1998).

Not only do these documents and the general direction of the Catholic Church since Vatican II mandate that some form of renewal should regularly take place, but they also suggest that good practice should be in place. Therefore, a good school should be asking questions about its



culture, critiquing it and putting it in some form of perspective (Warren, 1989). Catholic schools should be accountable for their stewardship, continually reflecting on their purpose and therefore committed to renewal (Davis, 1999a). A process of renewal comprised of affirmation and revision allows the Catholic school the opportunity to maintain a focus on issues that need to be remedied (Ryan, Brennan & Willmet, 1996) and to evaluate the extent to which the school is operating with congruence and consonance and in harmony with its fundamental purposes and espoused values. Congruence and consonance with espoused values and beliefs are key determinants of quality in any school (Keane & Keane, 1997; Spry & Sultmann, 1997).

Since the 1970s there have been radical restructuring initiatives by many education authorities worldwide and, by the advent of the 1990s, Catholic education authorities recognised the possibilities inherent in the reform agenda and sought to be proactive in this regard (Spry & Sultmann, 1997). As a result, at that time there were no fewer than eight systems in Australia operating on premises which were radically different from those of the government schools (Beare, 1995). However, it is readily acknowledged that there is no one way to undertake school renewal because of the uniqueness of each school community and because of the concept of it being a *journey of discovery* beginning when the members of the particular school community identify a gap between the vision and the reality (Spry, 2000). The variety of models that are used attempt to synthesise the best that is offered within the theory and practice of organisational management and educational leadership, whilst remaining authentic to the nature and purposes of Catholic schooling (Spry, 2000). Possibly because there is no one way to renew, the process has been described by terms such as “slow, piecemeal, non-linear and messy” (Brisbane Catholic Education, 1995, p. 11), with some within Catholic education stating that they are not satisfied with current renewal practices (Brisbane Catholic Education, 1995; Harney, 1997).

On a positive note, recent research indicates that there has been a significant growth in understanding of, and commitment to, CSR (Spry, 2000), with systems focusing their responses to quality assurance on the distinctive philosophy, beliefs and values which are at the heart of Catholic education (Keane & Keane, 1997).

### 3.7.2 Catholic School Renewal in Queensland

The previous chapter provided the necessary context for the study, tracing the developments relevant to the topic of Catholic School Renewal (CSR) in Queensland since 1973. It is worth mentioning here that during the late 1970s, Catholic system authorities began to see a leadership role for themselves within the discourse of CSR (Spry, 2000; Spry et al., 1992) and the need for a new administrative model. This led to the research study entitled *Project Catholic "School"* which had as its primary focus "to devise an administrative model capable of adaptation by the Catholic Education authorities to meet the needs of Catholic schools" (McLay, 1979, p. 1). The research was published in 1979 and was the first step towards a policy on CSR.

During the decade preceding the project, Catholic school authorities had witnessed demands for greater efficiency, democracy and equity in terms of the management of human, physical and financial resources. They witnessed a need for a systemic commitment to efficiency and effectiveness through processes of evaluation, with direction and resourcing decisions about school renewal being made by the stakeholders at the local level (Spry, 1995).

In 1986, the Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland issued a policy statement entitled "Self Renewing Catholic Schools in Queensland". The policy made formal renewal compulsory, stating "All Catholic schools in Queensland will engage in self-renewing processes which reflect Gospel values and focus on distinctive characteristics of a Catholic school" (Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland, 1986).

The policy listed the six characteristics which had been identified by Project Catholic "School" as:

- Community of Faith;
- Religious Atmosphere;
- Relationships;
- Developmental Goals;
- Parental Involvement; and
- Organisation and Administration (Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland, 1986).

The policy also stated that self-renewal was to take place in a cyclical manner. The policy concluded that "Catholic schools will be distinctive by their ability to self renew. They embrace

renewal in a spirit of hope, courage and love, and as a source of potential growth” (Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland, 1986).

The CSR process is a planned process of intervention for change (Treston, 1992) with a view to school improvement (Spry, 1995). In the past, there were two distinctly different ways of addressing school improvement - the inspectorial model and the consultative model. The former included an individual or team of experts coming into the school, making judgments, writing a report and recommending future action which was to be undertaken. The latter involved a school visit, resulting in a report which could be actioned or ignored. It is suggested that neither approach sits comfortably with the values of stewardship, community and social justice, and that a new approach is needed which allows the community to work within a framework which allows for freedom and creativity while offering guidance as to focus, processes and principles (Spry & Sultmann, 1997). There is no definitive way to renew, but by way of the community undertaking a series of phases, the energy of the school is aligned more closely with local expectations and with the school’s purpose as an excellent Catholic school providing the best possible Catholic education for its students. The process encourages the school community to reflect on its endeavours in the light of the mission of Jesus (Treston, 1992) and provides opportunities for communicative action and image-ing (Spry et al., 1992). The lifeworld and the system are brought into a creative balance (Habermas, 1984).

Spry and Sultmann (1997) offer an integrated model of renewal which contains the three elements of (1) Cultural characteristics, (2) Renewal processes and (3) Renewal principles. The cultural characteristics are regarded as important because culture is “the normative glue that holds the organisation together” (Smircich, 1983, p. 344). Culture is understood from a cognitive perspective, a symbolic perspective and a psychodynamic perspective, and the characteristics are listed as:

- Community of Faith;
- Religious Atmosphere;
- Relationships;
- Parental Involvement;
- Organisation and Administration; and
- Curriculum Outcomes.

The renewal processes are:

- Initiation;
- Examination;
- Reflection;
- Clarification;
- Action; and
- Review.

The renewal principles of the model hold that there are fundamental truths, principles and moral laws which must be identified and adhered to and these must underpin the efforts of the group.

### **3.7.3 Catholic School Renewal in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton**

Since 1989, there have been a number of policies concerned with the topic of CSR in the Rockhampton Diocese. Following the Queensland policy which was launched in 1986, the Rockhampton Diocese took a further three years before it launched its own written policy. The first policy was entitled *Self-Renewing Catholic Schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton* (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1989) and stated that

All schools responsible to the Diocesan Director of Catholic Education will engage in self-renewing processes which reflect Gospel values and focus on the distinctive characteristics of a Catholic school.

The decision to initiate the process of self renewal is made by the school community or by the Diocesan Director, or by some combination of these agents acting together.

While *self-renewing* is listed twice in the policy statement, once in the title and also in the consequences, the practice at the time (1989) was not one of self-renewal, but of renewal with an external team adding their wisdom and knowledge.

During the course of 1994 and 1995, the Rockhampton Diocesan Education Council formulated a new policy statement which more realistically reflected the then current practice of involving external evaluators. The second draft stated:

As part of ensuring the quality of Catholic Education, each diocesan school will engage in a process of continuous School Renewal to ensure that students have access to a

quality education which is Catholic in nature and purpose (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1995a).

This was expanded on in the third draft, which later translated into the 1995 diocesan policy and, more recently, the 2004 policy entitled *Quality Assurance of Catholic Schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton* (Appendix 4). The title makes no reference to the “self renewing” concept, nor does the policy or its consequences:

As part of ensuring the quality of Catholic Education, each diocesan school will engage in a process of continuous School Renewal to ensure that students have access to a quality education which is Catholic in nature and purpose. A School Development Plan to guide future growth and life is a significant feature of Catholic School Renewal (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 2004).

CSR in the Rockhampton Diocese is a response to the process of renewal which has characterised Catholic Church educational and organisational contexts for more than thirty years. In keeping with global Catholic Church and mission structures, any agency of the Catholic Church, including Catholic education, needs to be committed to a process of continuous renewal. Furthermore, schools have an obligation to respond to the pressures of research in the areas of school improvement, school effectiveness and school restructuring, as well as the requirements of the diocese, parish and other educational agencies (Davis, 1999a). In relation to these obligations, McCorley (1999b, p. 10) describes renewal as:

... a process undertaken by Church entities. The process of renewal is to provide assurances to both Church authorities and to the communities served by the agencies, that the mission is adhered to, and that quality service is provided (McCorley, 1999b, p. 10).

In the Rockhampton Diocese, authorities believe that the process of CSR provides a very real means for a community to re-assess its direction and demonstrate for all how its beliefs are translated into tangible outcomes for students. It is the intention that the School Mission Statement will provide a focus for reflection and discussion of the Catholic ethos and the values that operate within the school. The Mission Statement is therefore an essential element of the framework (Davis, 1999a).

It is acknowledged that the process of CSR cannot be guaranteed of success simply by its implementation. There must be a real sense of ownership rather than a sense of imposition (Davis, 1999a) or inspection.

The Rockhampton policy expands on the Queensland policy essentially in three areas. Firstly, the process of CSR is compulsory for all diocesan schools. Secondly, the Rockhampton policy makes no reference to the process as being self-renewing, and EVT's are brought in to add their wisdom. The rhetoric holds that the composition of the EVT is negotiated between the school principal and the Regional Supervisor of Schools as the Diocesan Director's appointee. However, the reality is reflected in the seventh consequence of the *Quality Assurance of Catholic Schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton Policy* (2004) which states that there is "an external team appointed by the Director to validate this evaluation" (Davis, 1999a, p. iii); it is not always possible to successfully negotiate a team.

The Regional Supervisor of Schools for the particular region is always on the team, bringing with him or her an interpretation of the process, as well as up to eight other team members, all of whom have their own interpretations and/or lack of knowledge of the process. There are four Regional Supervisors of Schools, and this research project has identified that it is possible for each to have a different interpretation of the process. As the Regional Supervisors of Schools lead the process, it is viable to conclude that the process is conducted in a different way in each of the regions according to the individual interpretation that each Regional Supervisor of Schools has of the process. Due to the number of schools and the timing of the external visits, there is often no single team member common to the school visits for the examination phase, resulting in a perceived lack of knowledge and/or ability by members of the EVT's. The third difference is that the formulation of a SDP is mandatory for all schools (Watkins, 1996).

#### **3.7.4 Summary**

As a result of the Second Vatican Council, there were sweeping reforms of the Catholic Church, not the least of which was its call to renewal through the development of collaborative models (Flannery, 1996c) and the call for Church to listen to others (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977, 1988). As an agency of the Catholic Church, it is necessary for the Catholic school to identify with the Catholic Church's mission (Laghi, 1996; McLaughlin, 1998) and directions. This necessitates schools listening to what their constituents have to say. The

literature reminds the reader that Catholic schools are first and foremost accountable to the Catholic Church and, secondly, to the parents who in turn make judgments about the school's performance (NCEC, 1998). An *official* way of expressing judgments is by utilising the CSR process.

As living systems, Catholic schools are naturally self-renewing and self-organising (Sungaila, 1995). If the Catholic Church, and the school as the Catholic Church's educative agency, is to be authentic, renewal is necessary (Spry & Sultmann, 1994; Treston, 1992). Renewal is also beneficial as it provides an opportunity for the stakeholders to scrutinise the stated purposes of the school, and to assess its performance (Keane & Keane, 1997; Paine et al., 1992) with a view to planned organisational growth (Spry, 2000).

Acknowledging the partnership that exists between parents and the school, CSR is an opportunity for parents and community members to have a voice in the school (Charter of Rights of the family, 1983; Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988; Griden et al., 1985). It allows for an examination and evaluation of whether the Catholic school is achieving the goals stated at the Second Vatican Council (Baum, 1983; Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977, 1988; McLaughlin, 1997), and is good practice as it allows for a continual critique of the school's culture, stewardship and focus (Davis, 1999a; Ryan et al., 1996).

It is acknowledged that there is no one way to renew (Spry, 2000) and, as such, the process can be viewed as "slow, non-linear and messy" (Brisbane Catholic Education, 1995, p. 11). However, research indicates that in recent times there has been a significant growth in understanding of, and commitment to, CSR (Spry, 2000), with systems focusing their responses to quality assurance on the distinctive philosophy, beliefs and values which are at the heart of Catholic education (Keane & Keane, 1997).

In Queensland, CSR grew out of *Project Catholic "School"*, the result of a research project instigated because of the need for a new administrative model which would meet the needs of Catholic schools (McLay, 1979). In 1986, the Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland issued a policy statement entitled *Self-Renewing Catholic Schools in Queensland*. The policy made formal renewal compulsory and further stated that "Catholic schools will be distinctive by their ability to self renew" (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1986).

The first Rockhampton policy, published in 1989 and entitled *Self-Renewing Catholic Schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton* mentioned “self-renewing” twice. In 1995, the second draft of the policy made no mention of “self-renewal”, nor does the third and current policy entitled *Quality Assurance of Catholic Schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton* (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 2004).

The Rockhampton policy expands on the Queensland policy in three areas, namely that CSR is compulsory for all diocesan schools, there is no reference to the process being *self-renewing*, and the formulation of a School Development Plan is mandatory for all schools (Watkins, 1996).

### **3.8 Conclusion**

The purpose of this chapter has been to review the literature pertaining to the study’s focus on CSR in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton. As the stated purpose of CSR includes quality assurance (Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland 1986; Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1995a, 1995b, 1999, 2003; Spry, 1995) within a framework of school effectiveness, school improvement and educational change, it was necessary to review the literature relating to the areas of school effectiveness and school improvement.

The chapter was presented in four parts. The first section was an overview of school restructuring. The next two sections examined school restructuring from an international perspective, and then from a national perspective. The fourth section reviewed the literature pertinent to the Catholic Church generally, and then Catholic schools in Queensland, followed by Catholic schools in the Rockhampton Diocese specifically.

The literature review identified that school reform has been taking place around the world for almost forty years, and that the approaches have been remarkably similar everywhere (Holly, 1990; O’Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998). There has been more community involvement than ever before (Hargreaves, 1994, 1997) which has led to a need for the changes to be deliberate and positive and sufficient to meet the changing needs of the school community. With the growth in community involvement has emerged both the need for a process and the need for effective leadership which is invariably provided by the school principal (Bolam, 1993; Campbell-Evans, 1993; Department of Employment and Science, 1977; Donahue, 1997; Wohlstetter, 1997).



A negative aspect of school reform approaches has been the development of competition which did not exist previously. It is acknowledged, particularly in the literature relating to New Zealand and Victoria, that the rich are getting richer and as a consequence, the poorer schools are losing their clientele and with them the associated funding and resourcing levels (Bullock et al., 1997; Gibson, 1998; Levacic, 1995; McGaw, 1997).

A number of quality assurance approaches were examined (Earnshaw, 1996; MacDonald, 1993) and the review concluded that all were quite similar. Each included the inter-related concepts of culture, vision and change, identifying that it is beneficial to identify the unique culture and vision of the school in order to enable planned educational change. All approaches included the use of an EVT (although its composition varied), which presents a public report that is the basis for an SDP to guide the future direction of the school.

The final section of the Literature Review was devoted to literature of a specifically Catholic focus. This literature highlighted that since the Second Vatican Council the Catholic Church has aimed to achieve renewal through the use of collaborative models. As an agency of the Catholic Church, the Catholic school needs to identify with these reforms.

Catholic schools acknowledge their accountability to the Catholic Church and to parents and other stakeholders. CSR is an official vehicle for demonstrating this accountability. CSR allows the stakeholders to scrutinise the stated purpose of the school and to assess its performance (Keane & Keane, 1997; Paine et al., 1992).

The Rockhampton model of CSR is different from the self-renewing model originally proposed and adopted by the Conference of Catholic Education, Queensland. The Rockhampton approach is not self-renewing, nor does it profess to be. The Rockhampton approach involves an EVT and is remarkably similar to many other approaches adopted around the nation and around the world. It is particularly similar to approaches that have been used in the New South Wales and the South Australian public systems and bears similarities to the process undertaken by the Office of Review in Victoria.

The Literature Review has illuminated the apparent similarities between the Rockhampton approach to CSR and the approach to quality assurance of other systems whose members claim no religious affiliation and therefore none of the associated rhetoric.

# Chapter Four

## Design of the Research

### 4.1 Introduction

This study explores how Catholic School Renewal is perceived by some staff members in four primary schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton. Specifically, the problem is explored from the personal perspectives of staff members from a selection of those school communities that undertook the examination phase of the Catholic School Renewal process.

The purpose of this chapter is to explain and justify the design adopted in the exploration of how staff members perceive Catholic School Renewal. The research questions that focus the research design are:

1. How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a source of potential growth?
2. How does the process of Catholic School Renewal ensure quality Catholic education?
3. How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a useful quality assurance tool?

### 4.2 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework is based on a research paradigm which reflects a particular worldview. All social research is guided by a theoretical underpinning which is influenced by beliefs about the world and how it should be understood or studied (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The theoretical framework determines the research approach and the data collection methods and analysis (Merriam, 1998; Neumann, 2000).

As the purpose of the study is to explore a phenomenon from the particular personal perspectives of staff members, an interpretive approach to research was employed. This approach is appropriate as it supports the belief that any human situation “can only be understood from the standpoint of the individual actors” (Candy, 1989, p. 3). It is appropriate for the researcher to adopt whatever methodology best meets the needs of the research problem. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches have unique strengths and complement each other, therefore both approaches were used (Howe, 1995). The particular epistemological stance adopted for this research project is referred to as constructionism (Crotty, 1998).

#### **4.2.1 Constructionist Epistemology**

Given that epistemology provides a “philosophical grounding for deciding what kinds of knowledge are possible and how we can ensure that they are both adequate and legitimate” (Maynard, 1994, p. 10), it is useful to identify the epistemology underlying the theoretical perspective of the research project. The epistemological stance adopted for this research project is constructionism.

Constructionism means that human beings do not find or discover knowledge and meaning, but rather, as the name suggests, they construct knowledge and meaning as they engage with the world they are interpreting (Crotty, 1998; Orlikowski & Baroudi, 2002; Schwandt, 2000), gaining understanding of the human drive which actively creates, constructs meaning and gives intellectual significance to life experiences (D’Andrea, 2000; Fenshaw, Gunstone & White, 1994; Holloway, 1999). All knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality, is contingent upon human practices being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context (Crotty, 1998). Meaning is constructed by working with the world and the objects in the world (Crotty, 1998), with the goal of constructionism being deep understanding, not imitative behaviour (Holloway, 1999; Phyte, 1997). Constructionism makes it clear that there is no true or valid interpretation, although there are some interpretations that are more useful than others (Crotty, 1998).

#### **4.2.2 Research Paradigm**

All research is underpinned by a theory of knowledge which consists of a set of beliefs, values and techniques which is shared by members of the scientific community (Sarantakos, 2005). This is often referred to as a paradigm. Educational research generates three major paradigmatic orientations - positivist, interpretive and critical (Carr & Kemmis, 1995; Kompf, 1993; Neuman, 2000; Orlikowski & Baroudi, 2002). Crotty (1998, p. 5), however, identifies five theoretical perspectives, these being positivism (and post-positivism), interpretivism, critical inquiry, feminism and postmodernism” As the focus of this study will be explored from the personal perceptions or interpretations of staff members of four Catholic primary schools, it is particularly appropriate to adopt the interpretive paradigm.

The interpretive approach is underpinned by a belief that people act for a variety of reasons which are based on the meanings they have of certain others, events and ‘things’ (Curry, 1999). Within the interpretive paradigm there are a number of ways that the problem can be explored; one of these ways is *symbolic interactionism* which is appropriate for this study because it enables inquiry into why different people act differently (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998), and is an interaction by way of significant gestures (Crotty, 1998) which may incorporate facial and bodily expressions, rituals, routines and myths and language (Schwandt, 1994). A more thorough investigation of *symbolic interactionism* will be made in Section 4.2.4 of this chapter.

### **4.2.3 Interpretivist Paradigm**

The theoretical perspective is the philosophical stance which underlies a research methodology. It provides a context for the process involved and a basis for its logic and its criteria. In other words, the way one sees the world impacts on how one researches the world (Crotty, 1998).

An interpretivist approach can be defined as “modes of systematic enquiry concerned with understanding human beings and the nature of their transactions and themselves with their surroundings” (Benoliel, 1984, cited in Polit and Beck, 2003, p. 517). It can be described as an attempt to understand the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it (Schwandt, 2000). Within interpretivism, reality is not objective and knowable, existing separate from the observer, but is assumed to be multiple and comprised of intersubjectively shared meanings (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Interpretivism regards human behaviour as a product of how people define their world and seeks to explore and represent their experiences through capturing how they construct their realities (Taylor & Bogden, 1998). The goal of interpretivism is to grasp or understand the meaning of social phenomena (Schwandt, 2000). Understanding is often referred to as *verstehen*, a term linked to Max Weber (1864-1920) who contrasted the interpretive approach (*Verstehen*) of the human and social sciences with the explicative approach (*Erklaren*) found in the natural sciences (Crotty, 1998).

The interpretive approach looks for culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life world (Crotty, 1998) and places a priority on searching for, uncovering, interpreting and illuminating the meanings of what is happening, being done, being understood or being interpreted by the participants in the social activities under scrutiny (Harney, 1997). That is:

The interpretative approach is the systematic analysis of socially meaningful action through the direct observation of people in natural settings in order to arrive at understandings and interpretations of how people create and maintain their social worlds (Neuman, 2000).

Interpretive approaches are sometimes criticised as being soft, unreliable and naïve (Miles & Huberman, 1994) and opposed to the use of statistics (Tusen, 1988; De Landsheere, 1988). Likewise, qualitative methods in general are sometimes criticised for giving too much credence to the participants' beliefs, with critics maintaining that the beliefs of the participants may or may not be informed (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Mollison (1990) dispels the first criticism by suggesting that the use of interpretive approaches helps to ensure that the system under analysis is not simply reduced to a list of cause and effect statements. By seeking out the variety of perspectives, interacting and talking with participants about their perceptions, qualitative researchers do not reduce the multiple interpretations to a norm (Glesne, 1999). Furthermore, interpretive researchers are not opposed to the use of statistics if they can illuminate the meaning of the problem under study (Crotty, 1998). Indeed, interpretive researchers are continually searching for connections both qualitative and quantitative between the subjective meanings being elicited, collected and analysed (Harney, 1997). Given that people do act on their beliefs, whether they are informed or otherwise (Tusen, 1988), it is necessary to give their beliefs credence in order to understand people's actions. According to Eisner (1981, p. 9), "To know a rose by its Latin name and yet to miss its fragrance is to miss much of the rose's meaning".

Symbolic interactionism was selected as the favoured orientation of interpretivism because it directs the researcher to place primary importance on the social meanings people attach to the world around them, and to adopt the perspective of those being studied (Charon, 2003; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). It subscribes to a deterministic view of human behaviour whereby the motivating factors of human behaviour are said to emanate from the social situations that individuals encounter (Charon, 2003).

#### **4.2.4 Symbolic Interactionism**

Symbolic Interactionism is adopted in this study because it aims to approach human behaviour from the standpoint of society rather than biology (Longmore, 1998). Symbolic interactionism proposes that although each person has his/her own personal, unique history, he/she also

participates in a variety of communities which share a stock of symbols including gestures, facial and bodily expressions, rituals and myths, and most importantly, language (Schwandt, 2000). Human beings create meaning by the use of these symbols when interacting with other human beings (Crotty, 1998; Sarantakos, 2005). It is *symbolic* as it is possible only because of the ‘significant symbols’ of language and other symbolic tools that we share when we communicate, and *interaction* because of the nature of the role undertaken by the researcher (Crotty, 1998). George Herbert Mead argued that:

Only in terms of gestures as significant symbols is the existence of mind or intelligence possible; for only in terms of gestures which are significant symbols can thinking - which is simply an internalized or implicit conversation of the individual with himself [sic] by means of such gestures - take place. (Mead, 1934, p. 47 in Crotty, 1998).

Symbolic interactionism directs the researcher to place primary importance on the social meanings people attach to the world around them, and to adopt the perspective of those being studied, not his or her own perspective (Charon, 2003; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998):

The situation must be seen as the actor sees it, the meanings of objects and acts must be determined in terms of the actor’s meanings, and the organisation of a course of action must be understood as the actor organises it. The role of the actor in the situation would have to be taken by the observer in order to see the social world from his [sic] perspective (Psathas, 1973, p. 6.).

Symbolic interactionism requires an ideographical, rather than a nomothetical approach; situations must be studied from within on the basis of the representations of the individuals concerned. Through the use of interviews and participant observation the participants should be allowed to deliver and construct their own perception of things (Cossette, 1998). Symbolic interactionism acknowledges that an individual’s self is constructed of the:

- material self – individual identity kit which is constituted by tangible objects that represent who one is as an individual (clothes etc.); and
- social self – set of relations one has with other people (Sweet, 1999).

Social self forms the great majority of one’s identity.

During the course of this study the researcher interacted with the participants in an attempt to gather their perceptions of CSR. This information was obtained through the use of interviews,

member checks, a survey questionnaire and opportunities for group feedback. In order to gain an accurate reflection of the participants' perceptions, the researcher honoured the three basic assumptions of symbolic interactionism:

- that human beings act towards things on the basis of the meanings that these things have for them;
- that the meaning of such things is derived from, and arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows; and
- that these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with things encountered (Crotty, 1998; Patton, 2002; Sweet, 1999).

Like several generations of researchers before, this researcher discovered the theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism to be clearly useful when identifying research questions and framing research processes (Crotty, 1998).

### **4.3 Case Study Approach**

Case study is a research approach which is used in anthropology, medicine and social work, and is prevalent in the field of educational research to observe the characteristics of an individual unit such as a child, a clique, a group, a school, a community, a phenomenon or the effects of a policy on a system (Cohen & Manion, 2000; Merriam, 1998; Sturman, 1997). "Educational processes, problems and programs can be examined using case study to bring about understanding that may affect, and possibly improve, practice" (Merriam, 1998, p. 41). Skilbeck (1983, p. 18) argues that the case study "is the key factor in the revitalisation and democratisation of educational practice and knowledge". Case study is the examination of an instance in action and aims to convey understanding (Merriam, 1998).

Case study is congruent with the interpretivist tradition of research and can provide meaningful symbolic interaction between the researcher and the participants. It can be defined as a process of research which tries to describe and analyse some entity in qualitative, complex and comprehensive terms not infrequently as it unfolds over a period of time (Miles & Huberman, 1994). It is a preferred strategy when "how", "why" or "what" questions are being asked or when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within a real life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Burns, 1994; Yin, 1994). Case study utilises research methods and



techniques to obtain and portray a “rich” descriptive account of meanings and experiences of people in their social setting (Harney, 1997).

The approach enables the researcher to gain a better understanding of the historical and social process that produced the problem (Walmsley, 1994). Case studies “concentrate on the way particular groups of people confront specific problems, taking a holistic view of the situation. They are problem-centred, small scale, entrepreneurial endeavours” (Shaw, 1978, cited in Merriam, 1998, p. 11) which involve the collection and recording of data and the preparation of a report or presentation of the case (Stenhouse, 1985b).

The case study is based on complexity and holism rather than simple parts and reductionism (Harney, 1997), accepting the various interpretations and explanations offered by participants as the foundation for knowledge (Lakomski, 1987). Case study approach provides an archive of descriptive material that can have multiple interpretations and invite intervention. It is often more publicly accessible than other forms of reporting (Stake, 1995).

The focus of this study is on exploring CSR from the perspectives of staff members of some Catholic primary schools; therefore, a case study approach within an interpretive paradigm is adopted to investigate the phenomenon. The researcher acknowledges that there is no one accepted definition of case study, but it has been described as a single entity, a unit which has boundaries (Smith, 1978, in Merriam, 1998). Stake (1995) also refers to case study as an integrated system which emphasises the unity and wholeness of a system, but confines the attention to those aspects that are relevant to the research problem over a period of time. Case study is utilised to capture and portray the interplay of factors and elements within the bounded system (Smith, 1978, in Merriam, 1998). The researcher adopted the following principles of case study as a guide:

- the case study allows for a reconstruction of the participants’ constructions (emic inquiry);
- the case study is an effective vehicle for demonstrating the interplay between inquirer and participants;
- the case study provides the thick description so necessary for judgments of transferability; and

- the case study represents an unparalleled means for communicating contextual information that is grounded in the particular setting that was studied. (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, cited in Lee, 1997, p. 79).

Within the context of this study, the case consists of four Catholic primary schools located in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton. The common element of each of the schools is that its staff members had undertaken the examination phase of the CSR process within a twelve month period between Term 4, 1998 and Term 4, 1999. The “period of time” (Stake, 1988, p. 258) is therefore November 1998 to October 1999.

A defining feature of qualitative case study is that the end product, or the report, is a “rich, thick description of the phenomenon under study” (Merriam, 1998, p. 29). The holistic or comprehensive descriptions of the case include myriad dimensions, factors, variables and categories woven together into an idiographic framework (Patton, 2002). Other characteristics or basic generic qualities of case study are that they are:

- particularistic – portraying events, situations or phenomenon;
- holistic – capturing many variables;
- longitudinal – telling a story over a period of time;
- interpretive – eliciting images and analysing situations;
- descriptive - presenting documentation of events, quotes, samples of artifacts and rich, thick description of the phenomenon; and
- heuristic – illuminating the readers’ understanding of the phenomenon under study (Merriam, 1998).

Case study is grounded in the experiences of the researcher and the participants for whom the researcher (as author) writes (Shaw, 1983), and is therefore validated by the responses of the readership (the participants). The case study becomes an interpretive presentation of the case resting upon, quoting and citing the case record for its justification (Stenhouse, 1985a) and working from the premise that direct personal experience is an efficient, comprehensive and satisfying way of creating understanding (Stake, 1995). Knowledge learned from case study is different from other research in four important ways. It is:

- more concrete – more vivid, concrete and sensory;
- more contextual – our knowledge is rooted in context as is knowledge in case studies;
- more developed by reader interpretation – readers bring their own knowledge and understanding, add the new data and make new generalisations; and

- based more on referenced populations determined by the reader. (Stake, 1981, in Merriam, 1998, p. 35)

Case study proved to be a useful way of gaining insight to the perspectives of some staff members about their experiences of CSR.

#### **4.4 Research Participants**

The research is situated within the context of four Catholic primary schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton that participated in the examination phase of the CSR process between November 1998 and October 1999. Each of the research participants is a staff member at one of the four schools that comprise the case. The schools represent three of the four regions of the diocese. None of the schools in the fourth (Western) region had undertaken the examination phase of the CSR process within the specified twelve month period; therefore the researcher selected two schools from one of the other regions. The extra school was selected because it has some of the characteristics that typify schools in the Western Region:

1. Is not in a major provincial centre.
2. Is the only Catholic school in the town.
3. Is a single stream or smaller school.
4. Has a fairly high turn over of teaching staff.
5. Is in a lower socio economic area.

##### **4.4.1 Participants in the Interviews**

Having identified the problem and the research site, it was necessary to select a *sample* to be researched. The two types of sampling are probability sampling and nonprobability sampling. The former, which usually involves a random sample, is inappropriate in this case because it allows the researcher to generalise results from the sample to the population from which it was drawn (Merriam, 1998, p. 61); this is not a goal, nor is it desirable in qualitative research. Therefore, nonprobability sampling was the selected strategy.

The purpose of the research project is to explore a phenomenon from the perspectives of others and it is therefore appropriate to use a purposeful (Patton, 2002) form of sampling. “Purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand and gain

insight, and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned” (Merriam, 1998, p. 61).

To begin the purposeful sampling (Merriam, 1998; Patton, 2002) the researcher determined the following criteria for the purposeful selection of participants to be interviewed (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993):

1. Currently employed in a Catholic primary school in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton which has undertaken the examination phase of the Catholic CSR process within the last twelve months.
2. The school must be one of the four selected to form the case.
3. A willingness to be interviewed by the researcher.
4. A willingness to be audio-taped or to allow the researcher to take interview notes.

Appendix 5 provides details of interview participants. Pseudonyms are used for participants and the names of the schools.

Having decided to undertake purposeful sampling (Merriam, 1998; Patton, 2002), the researcher initially contacted the principals of the four schools and requested that they gauge interest from staff members with regard to their being interviewed on the topic. Furthermore, the researcher made a specific request to interview all members of each school’s leadership team, which, for the purposes of this study, comprised the principal, the Assistant to the Principal (Religious Education) (APRE) and the School Curriculum Officer (SCO). After the principals had indicated a willingness from themselves and some staff members to be involved, a letter was sent to the participants explaining the purpose of the research, giving some background information and providing some questions which could be considered prior to the interview date (Appendix 1 and 2). The four principals sought confirmation from those who had indicated a willingness to be interviewed. They also prepared a timetable for the visit.

In response to the expressed desire to interview all members of Leadership Teams, two of the APREs chose not to be interviewed. Further investigations and discussions indicated that this was not due to any particular point of view or opinions regarding the research project, but was because they did not want to be part of an interview process. Subsequently only one of these APREs completed the survey questionnaire as the other was on sick leave.

As the research was embedded in real life situations it was necessary to provide the participants with pseudonyms to ‘anonymise’ their true identities (Stake, 1995). It was also necessary to provide each of the schools with a pseudonym.

#### **4.4.2 Contextual Information During the Examination Phase**

The following represents the context of each of the schools when the *examination phase* was undertaken.

##### **St Michael’s**

At St Michael’s the examination phase was undertaken in accordance with diocesan directives. The APRE led the internal process with the principal taking a passive role. The Regional Supervisor of Schools provided the necessary leadership and information.

The EVT had a standard composition, being comprised of:

The Regional Supervisor of Schools (Southern Region)

The Assistant to the Director (Religious Education)

The Assistant to the Director (Curriculum)

A primary principal (from the Rockhampton region)

The St Michael’s data were gathered by interviewing eleven staff members which included three non teachers and eight teachers, including the principal, the APRE and the SCO (refer to Table 1.1 and Appendix 5), and eleven survey questionnaires from four non teachers and seven teachers which again included the principal, APRE and School Curriculum Officer (SCO) (refer to Tables 5.6 and Appendix 6). As the researcher was a member of the EVT he had also gained some first hand anecdotal insights.

##### **St Kevin’s**

The Internal Review Committee (IRC) at St Kevin’s was led by the SCO. The composition of the EVT was:

The Regional Supervisor of Schools (Rockhampton Region)

The Assistant to the Director (Religious Education)

The Regional Supervisor of Schools (Western Region)

A primary principal (from the southern region)

The EVT was not quite a standard one, having two supervisors, but this was due to circumstances that arose after the EVT was formed. The Regional Supervisor of Schools is always the leader of the Team, but because Assistants to the Director are Diocesan, they are not always available for Renewals due to the number of schools in the Diocese. When they are unavailable they nominate a 'replacement'. The Regional Supervisor of Schools (Western) had been nominated and appointed to the EVT during the course of 1998, at which time he was a primary school principal in the northern region. Therefore, when formed, the EVT consisted of the Regional Supervisor of Schools, the Assistant to the Director (RE), a nominee for the Assistant to the Director (Curriculum) and a peer principal.

The St Kevin's data were gathered by interviewing three non teachers and four teachers which included the principal and the APRE (refer to Table 1.1 and Appendix 5) and survey questionnaires from five non teachers and eight teachers which included the principal (at the time of the survey questionnaire the SCO had taken up a position at another school).

### **St Mary's and St Finbar's**

St Mary's and St Finbar's are in the same geographical region of the diocese and therefore had the same Regional Supervisor of Schools leading the process. Neither school had a standard EVT, although the variations were minor. The composition of the EVT at St Mary's was:

Regional Supervisor of Schools (Northern Region)

Assistant to the Director (Religious Education)

Assistant to the Director (Curriculum)

A primary principal (from the northern region)

The factor that prevented this EVT from being regarded as a standard EVT was the inclusion of a principal from the same region as the school under examination. Normally a principal from another region would be involved as local peer principals are not permitted to be on EVTs. The principal of St Mary's informed the researcher that this anomaly occurred because the Regional Supervisor of Schools had been "too disorganised to organise the External Team in time and had

to slot someone in at late notice” (Quentin). It was considered easier to slot in a local than someone who would have had to re-organise many aspects of their life to be away from home at short notice. In the circumstances, the principal of St Mary’s felt that he had no option but to agree to this.

The composition of the EVT for St Finbar’s was quite different as neither of the Assistants to the Director was involved and they had therefore nominated replacements. There was also an extra principal on the EVT who had been approached by the principal of St Finbar’s and asked if she would join the EVT with the specific task of “keeping an eye on the supervisor” (Dominic). This principal was from the same region and had been selected by the principal of St Finbar’s as someone who would be able to question and challenge the approach of the Regional Supervisor of Schools, in whom the principal of St Finbar’s had little faith and less respect. The composition of the EVT was therefore:

- Regional Supervisor of Schools (Northern Region)
- Assistant to the Director (RE) nominee (an APRE from the western region)
- Assistant to the Director (Curriculum) nominee (a Regional Curriculum Coordinator from the western region - Secondary background)
- A primary principal (from the Rockhampton region)
- A primary principal (from the northern region)

The leadership of the IRC at St Mary’s was not standard either as the principal led the process with the assistance of the APRE. This happened for two reasons. The first being that the principal was suspicious of the process due to (a) a lack of understanding of the purpose of it and (b) a lack of faith in the Regional Supervisor of Schools who was leading the EVT. The second reason was due to the nature of the principal at the time who felt a need to control everything that was happening at his school.

At St Mary’s the collation of all surveys was undertaken by school officers as part of their duties so that during the internal process staff members were not placed under pressure.

The data for this research project were gathered at St Mary’s by interviewing five teachers, who were the principal, the APRE, the SCO, the Learning Support Teacher and a class teacher, and

one non teacher (refer to Table 1.1 and Appendix 5), and seventeen survey questionnaires from ten teachers including those listed above and seven non teachers (refer to Table 5.6 and Appendix 6).

The IRC at St Finbar's was led by the SCO. The data from St Finbar's were gathered by conducting four interviews with the principal, SCO and two class teachers (refer Appendix 5) and twenty-seven survey questionnaires from eighteen teachers, representing all teacher roles in the school, and nine non teachers (refer Tables 5.6 and Appendix 6).

#### **4.4.3 Respondents to the Survey Questionnaire**

Following the collation and initial analysis of data gathered during the interviews, the researcher presented preliminary interpretations back to the participants. After noting any feedback and making changes where necessary, the researcher again contacted the principals of the four schools that formed the case with regard to returning to the schools to conduct sessions with groups of staff members. The proposal was that the researcher would present:

1. a brief history and explanation of CSR as it is conducted in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton;
2. the Queensland and Rockhampton policies relating to CSR;
3. the research project to date;
4. a "walk through" the survey questionnaire; and
5. an opportunity for participants to complete the survey questionnaire and return it to the researcher.

The researcher requested that he be given access to all staff members during the visit, including school officers and teaching staff. The researcher indicated a preparedness to be as flexible as was necessary to accommodate local school needs. For this stage of the research the criteria for the purposeful selection of participants (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993) was that they would be:

- currently employed in a Catholic primary school in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton which had undertaken the examination phase of the Catholic School Renewal process within the last twelve months. The school must be one of the four selected to form the case;
- willing to attend a presentation by the researcher; and



- willing to complete the survey questionnaire entitled *An Exploration of the Process of Catholic School Renewal in the Diocese of Rockhampton from the Perspectives of Staff members*.

Appendix 6 provides details of respondents to the questionnaire.

At three of the schools the researcher presented twice. During the course of the school day the researcher presented to all non-teaching staff. This was followed by an opportunity for the non-teaching staff to complete the survey questionnaire and seek clarification and assistance as necessary. After the completion of the official school day, the same presentation was given to the teaching staff who then completed the survey questionnaire, seeking clarification and assistance as needed.

The principal of the fourth school requested that more time be allocated to the school, and that a personal presentation be made to each of the participants. At this school personal presentations were given to individual members of staff. Instead of being asked to complete the survey questionnaire in the researcher's presence, the researcher read through it with the participant and gave assistance where necessary. The participants were asked to complete the survey questionnaire and return it to the school office before the end of the school day. Some of the participants completed the survey questionnaire in the researcher's presence; others took it with them and completed it in private. The survey questionnaires were collected from the school office as the researcher left the school. Two completed survey questionnaires were mailed to and received by the researcher subsequent to the school visit.

As the research is embedded in real life situations it is necessary to 'anonymise' the true identities of the participants (Stake, 1995). The researcher intended to use the SPSS package (SPSS Inc., 1997) to generate a range of descriptive data from the survey questionnaire responses, and therefore the participants were allocated an identification number at this stage of the research. It was also necessary to provide each of the schools with a pseudonym, which was the same as the pseudonym used during the interviews.

#### **4.5 Data Collection**

The interview and the survey questionnaire were selected as methods of data collection for this research.

### 4.5.1 The Interview

The interview was engaged as a research method because “in all forms of qualitative research ... data are collected through interviews” (Merriam, 1998, p. 71). The interview “is prepared and executed in a systematic way, is controlled by the researcher to avoid bias and distortion and is related to a specific research question and a specific purpose” (Sarantakos, 1993, p. 177). “The interview is the main road to multiple realities” (Stake, 1995, p. 64) and is defined as “a purposeful conversation, usually between two people, but sometimes involving more, that is directed by one in order to get information from the other” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 96). Whether person to person or in a group situation, the interview can be defined as a conversation with a purpose. It is usually quite simple to encourage people to be interviewed, as most people are pleased to accept the opportunity to be listened to. The purpose of an interview is to obtain a special kind of information; to enter into the other person’s perspective (Patton, 2002).

The decision to use interviewing or another method as the primary data collection mode should be based on the information needed and the best way to get it. If observation of behaviour is not possible, or if the researcher is interested in feelings, people’s interpretations of the world or past events that cannot be replicated, then interviewing is the best method. “Interviewing is the preferred tactic ... when ... it will get *better data or more data or data at less cost* than other tactics” (Dexter, 1970, cited in Merriam, 1998, p. 72).

Having made the informed decision to use interviewing as a research method, it was necessary to establish which type of interviewing technique should be used. This decision is usually determined by the amount of structure desired (Merriam, 1998). Table 4.1 illustrates the three types of interviews:

**Table 4.1 The Three Types of Interviews**

Highly Structured/Standardized	Semi-structured	Unstructured/Informal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Wording of questions predetermined</li><li>▪ Order of questions predetermined</li><li>▪ Oral form of a survey</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Mix of more and less structured questions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Open-ended questions</li><li>▪ Flexible, exploratory</li><li>▪ More like a conversation</li></ul>

(adapted from Merriam, 1998, p. 73)

The highly structured or standardised interview is comprised of a carefully formulated set of questions which are devised before the interview and are asked in a pre-determined order with the questions being answered rather than discussed, considered or analysed. This approach does not allow the researcher to “access participants’ perspectives and understandings of the world. Instead, you get reactions to the investigator’s preconceived notions of the world” (Merriam, 1998, p. 74). This type of interview is formal and has purpose and structure, but is not the best method for use when adopting an interpretivist paradigm.

At the other end of the continuum is the unstructured or informal interview. This method proves to be beneficial when the interviewer does not know enough about the phenomenon being investigated to ask relevant questions. It is often used in conjunction with participant observation in the early stages of a case study (Merriam, 1998).

However, for the purposes of this study, the researcher wished to explore the topic by using questions with fixed and unfixed wording to elicit information from the participants (Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell & Alexander, 1990). Therefore semi-structured interview was selected as the most appropriate strategy of research data gathering.

#### **4.5.2 The Semi-structured Interview**

The specific type of interview chosen for this research project is described either as semi-structured (Burns, 1997; Sarantakos, 2005) or the general interview guide (Patton, 2002). This type of interview is unstandardised, individual, open and focused (Sarantakos, 2005) and involves the use of an interview schedule or guide to focus the dialogue on specific topics. Criteria which set this type of interview aside from others include:

- the use of open questions only - the participant is able to formulate responses the way that he/she sees fit;
- the practice of usually only one person being interviewed at a time;
- the flexible nature of the structure of the questions; and
- the interviewer having the freedom to change the format, structure and order of the questions to best meet the goals of the research question - free and open discussion, guided rather than led by and restricted by the interviewer. (adapted from Coughlan, 1998, p. 55).

The use of an interview schedule or guide (Patton, 2002) provides topics within which the interviewer is able to explore, probe and ask questions that will illuminate the topic, whilst making the best use of the limited time available in an interview. It also helps to ensure the construction of a set of unambiguous questions which serve a purpose and are easy to answer (Segal, as cited in Punch, 2000). The flexibility of using an interview guide in a semi structured interview allows individual perspectives and experiences to surface within a particular context, while allowing comparisons across participants to be drawn (Bogdan & Biklen, 2002) Some other advantages of this technique include:

- the rapport developed between the interviewer and the interviewee because this type of interview requires that trust, collegiality and friendship be developed between the two;
- the sensitivity to the perspective of the interviewee;
- the interviewee's response is more natural;
- the interviewee feels more at ease and less threatened; and
- it allows greater depth than is the case with other methods of data collection (Cohen & Manion, 2000; Sarantakos, 2005).

As a research method, semi-structured interviews do have some limitations which include:

- losing the opportunity to understand how the interviewees themselves structure the topic at hand;
- variations in depth, breadth and amount of information received from different interviewees compound the considerable difficulties of managing information gained through open-ended questioning;
- lack of comparability between interview data;
- salient points may be inadvertently omitted;
- possible influence of the interviewer on the interviewee's responses; and
- interviewees may be less willing to discuss their feelings because of the lack of anonymity (Patton, 2002; Roche, 1997; Sarantakos, 2005)

The aim of the semi-structured interview is to ensure an open, non-threatening and relaxed atmosphere, conducive to discussion rather than a question and answer session (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). While it is true that the purpose of the research determines the questions asked, it is also true that their content, sequence and wording are in the hands of the researcher (Kerlinger, 1986). Having the freedom to select the content, sequence and wording allowed the researcher to ensure that the interviews were undertaken in a flexible manner. Interviewees were

informed that the principles of anonymity and confidentiality would be observed at all times and that they were free to withdraw from the project at any time.

As it is crucial that the researcher practises active and accepting listening throughout the interview session (Burns, 1997; Stake, 1995), “there is no substitute for a full tape recording of an interview” (Powney & Watts, 1987, p. 124). It was therefore decided that whenever interviewees were willing, the interviews would be audio-taped. Audio-taping allows the researcher to have a full and accurate record of the interview, and allows for the interviewer and the interviewee to assume a more relaxed mode, as the taking of notes can be distracting. Audio-taping the interviews also allows for multiple replays to provide clarity and accurate transcription, as well as promoting awareness of verbal mannerisms and emotive changes in tone and dialogue (Hanifin, 1999). Of the twenty-eight interviewees, nineteen agreed to be audio-taped.

During transcription the interview data were edited in order to explicate the main phenomena that might be included in the narrative or to identify aspects that needed further discussion. In order to achieve this, the researcher worked “back and forth between interview notes and sections of the (audio-) tape” (Patton, 1990, p. 350) being careful to preserve important quotations. The same process was undertaken when transcribing interviews where interview notes were the sole means of recording.

#### **4.5.3 The Survey Questionnaire**

In the social sciences, questionnaires are often the only method of data collection used (Sarantakos, 2005). While not adopting a single data source approach, it was appropriate that this research include the survey questionnaire as it:

- is less expensive than other methods which require the employment of researchers to complete data collection;
- produces quick results;
- affords the participant some flexibility when completing the questionnaire;
- eliminates the risk of an interviewer influencing responses consciously or unconsciously;
- provides a consistency and uniformity which can be provided because all participants receive the same questions presented in the same way; and
- elicits responses that are likely to be the result of reflection and thought (adapted from Coughlan, 1998, pp. 57-58.).

However, there are a number of limitations associated with the survey questionnaire as a research method. These limitations are related to the researcher not being present when the data are being collected, and therefore:

- discussion and clarification are not possible;
- the researcher is unable to inspire the participants to complete the questionnaire;
- the researcher cannot collect additional information while the questionnaire is being completed; and
- the circumstances under which the questionnaire is completed are unknown to the researcher (Sarantakos, 2005).

While the above are legitimate limitations to the method, they are not relevant to this particular study because the researcher was present when the majority of survey questionnaires were completed.

The researcher conducted a number of sessions with groups of staff members. Each session was comprised of a presentation which included:

- a brief history and explanation of CSR as it is conducted in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton;
- an explanation of the Queensland and Rockhampton policies relating to CSR;
- an overview of the research project to date;
- a “walk through” the survey questionnaire; and
- an opportunity for participants to complete the questionnaire and return it to the researcher.

#### **4.5.4 The Structure of the Survey Questionnaire**

In order to achieve the desired goals while utilising the survey questionnaire as a research method it is necessary to ensure that the survey questionnaire has the correct structure and format. There are three main elements to a questionnaire which, if planned properly, will minimise the possibility of participants “misunderstanding or mis-interpreting the reason for the questionnaire and any relevant instructions which may assist in (completing) the questionnaire in the intended manner” (Coughlan, 1998, p. 59). The elements are the covering letter, the instructions and the main body (Sarantakos, 2005).

The covering letter explains the purpose of the study, situates the questionnaire within the study, and guarantees confidentiality and anonymity. The instructions should be clear and concise,

making it clear that the researcher would like the participant to respond candidly, reflecting his/her own views and not those that he/she believes the researcher is attempting to explicate. The main body refers to the actual questions asked. The issues that contribute to the success or otherwise of the questionnaire are the types of questions, the order of the questions, the length of the questionnaire, and the presentation of the questionnaire (Sarantakos, 2005).

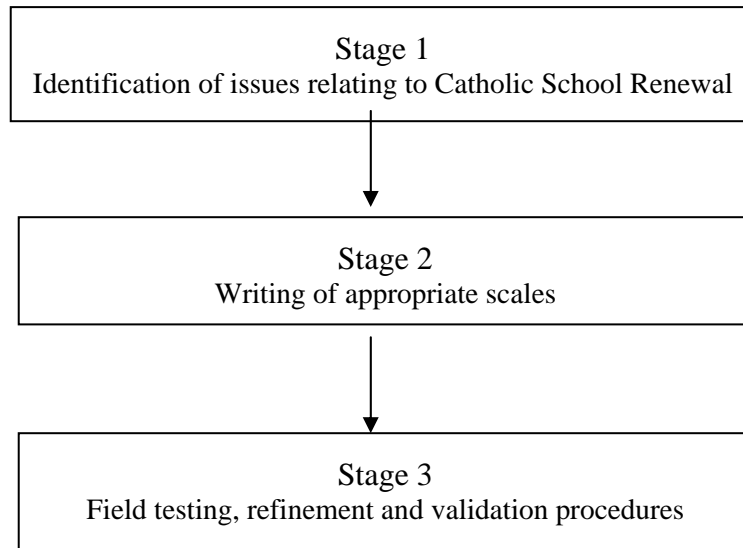
#### **4.5.5 Developing the Survey Questionnaire**

When developing a questionnaire as a research instrument, one of four approaches may be adopted: intuitive-rational, intuitive-theoretical, factor analytic or empirical group discrimination (Fraser, 1986). For the purposes of this study, the intuitive-rational approach was adopted because it relies on the researcher's, and other experts', intuitive understandings of the dimensions being assessed (Fraser, 1986). The instrument development criteria (Dorman, 1994) adopted for the study were:

1. Consistency with issues relating to CSR which were identified by staff members of some of the school communities which undertook the examination phase of the CSR process in 1999.
2. Salience to stakeholders. It was considered important to involve stakeholders in the development process (Marks, 2000).
3. The survey questionnaire was designed with the intention of administering it to school staff members during the course of the working day or at afternoon staff meetings. It was therefore considered important that the actual time needed to complete the survey questionnaire be kept to a minimum.

To provide a framework for the development of the survey questionnaire a three stage procedure was implemented. The three-stage procedure is shown in Figure 4.2:

**Figure 4.2 The Three-stage Instrument Development and Validation Procedure**



(adapted from Marks, 2000, p. 178)

As a consequence of the twenty-eight interviews, the researcher was able to identify salient features for participants (Stage 1). These salient features were examined and appropriate scales were developed with responses recorded on a five-point Likert scale (Stage 2). The survey questionnaire was submitted for comment and assistance to an Australian Catholic University academic who is regarded as an expert in scale development and survey questionnaires. After a number of drafts the survey questionnaire was administered to a sample of participants, being the staff of the school in Rockhampton where the researcher was principal. Based on the data collected from the sample group, a final version of the survey questionnaire was developed (Stage 3) for use in the research project. The development process is consistent with the intuitive-rational scale development procedure recommended by Fraser (1977) and Murphy and Fraser (1978).

#### **4.6 Consistency and Trustworthiness**

The aim of the case study researcher is to increase understanding of the variables, parameters and dynamics of the case under study, rather than seeking one true definition of the situation, because in social situations truth is multiple (McDonald & Walker, 1975). Therefore, it is acknowledged that issues that relate to consistency and trustworthiness of case studies may be interpreted in a number of different ways (Anderson, 1998). While the aim of all research is to produce consistent and trustworthy knowledge in an ethical manner, this takes different forms in qualitative research than in quantitative research (Merriam, 1998)



#### **4.6.1 Consistency**

When conducting quantitative research, consistency is concerned with the replicability of scientific findings. However, this is problematic in qualitative research because human behaviour is not static, nor is it the aim of the researcher to isolate the laws of human behaviour. Researchers seek to describe and explain the world as those in the world see it (Merriam, 1998). As there are difficulties associated with the traditional use of the term *consistency* when applied to qualitative research, attention is given to ascertaining the dependability or consistency of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The question is whether or not the results are consistent with the data collected (Merriam, 1998).

As a means of authenticating and explaining research findings, an audit trail is useful (Dey, 1993). An audit trail is created by providing details of “how data were collected, how categories were derived, and how decisions were made throughout the inquiry” (Merriam, 1998, p. 207). If others are able to follow the trail of the researcher, they will be in a position to judge the quality of the research findings for themselves (Patton, 2002).

Because the “researcher is the instrument of data collection and the centre of the analytic process” (Patton, 1990, p. 461), it is necessary that he/she has credibility as a researcher. The researcher should explain the assumptions and theory behind the study, as well as his or her position regarding the research problem (Le Compte & Preissle, 1993). The researcher should “openly divulge information concerning (his or her) professional interests, perspective and past career history” (Hanifin, 1999, p. 140). This is discussed further in section 4.6.4.

#### **4.6.2 Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness is concerned with the accuracy of the findings, or how they match with the reality of the participants, and is a strength of interpretive approaches to research (Merriam, 1998). The production of generalisable knowledge is not an appropriate goal in qualitative research (Erickson, 1986) as “a single case or small nonrandom sample is selected precisely because the researcher wishes to understand the particular in depth, not to find out what is generally true of the many” (Merriam, 1998, p. 208). As data do not speak for themselves there is always an interpreter or translator (Ratcliffe, 1983), and therefore an inherent danger that the researcher may misunderstand the meanings that the participant intended (Brown, 1983); thus the need for internal validation. The internal validation strategies used in this study were:

1. Member checks – presenting data and interpretations to the participants and asking if the results are plausible.
2. Peer examination – inviting colleagues to comment on the findings as they emerge.
3. Triangulation – using multiple sources of data or multiple methods to confirm emerging findings (adapted from Merriam, 1998).

#### **4.6.3 Triangulation**

All researchers have an ethical obligation to minimize misrepresentation and misunderstanding of data (Stake, 1995, p. 109) and to establish trustworthy data (Lather, 1986). Therefore, triangulation is used to ensure that data gathered are not the result of a single data-collection method. Triangulation is qualitative cross-validation conducted among different data-collection methods as a comparison of information to determine whether or not there is corroboration (Wiersma, 1995). It brings varieties of evidence into relationship with each other as a means of comparing and contrasting (Elliot, 1991). Denzin (1984) identifies four types of triangulation protocols:

1. Data source triangulation.
2. Investigator triangulation.
3. Theory triangulation.
4. Methodological triangulation.

Data source triangulation and methodological triangulation were utilised in this research. The former is an attempt to determine if what we are observing and reporting remains consistent when found under different contextual circumstances (Patton, 2002; Stake, 1995). Data source triangulation helps make links and establishes “a chain of evidence” (Burns, 1997, p. 283).

Methodological triangulation is the most recognised of the protocols (Stake, 1995) and involves using multiple research approaches within the study. The methods used in this study were the semi-structured interview, focus groups and the survey questionnaire. The multiple approaches are used to “illuminate or nullify some extraneous influences” (Stake, 1995, p. 114).

#### **4.6.4 The Researcher**

As the purpose of this study is to explore a phenomenon from the particular perspectives of staff members, the appropriate theoretical perspective is a qualitative approach. The researcher is principally responsible for the collection and analysis of data when this approach is adopted; therefore it is necessary for him/her to present to the reader any personal background that might

influence the research. This approach rests within the assumptions of interpretivist theories which recognise that inquiry is always influenced by the values of the researcher and respondents (Candy, 1989, p. 4).

I began my career as a Catholic primary school teacher, working in the Catholic diocese of Toowoomba, in 1982. In 1989 I accepted my first position as a principal in the Toowoomba diocese. I commenced my second principalship in 1991 and moved to the Rockhampton diocese in mid 1994 to take up my third principalship. I worked as a principal until the end of 2000. Since the commencement of 2001 I have worked as Assistant to the Director – Schools (Northern Region) in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton.

I was known to each of the four principals as a peer principal prior to the research being undertaken. I had a professional friendship, forged through the principalship, with two of the principals and was known to two of the school staffs, having been involved as an EVT member in the examination phase of their most recent CSRs. This EVT experience had allowed me to gain the trust, acceptance and respect of the staff members of the two schools. One of the other schools is located in the same city as the school where I was principal, and therefore a number of staff members knew me with varying degrees of familiarity, while others knew of me by reputation or hearsay. The staff members of the fourth school had no previous experience of me.

I had limited first hand involvement with the CSR process prior to commencing the research project. I had undertaken the process at my own school once and had been a member of EVTs on two occasions. Familiarity with the literature pertaining to the process, combined with listening to the views of colleagues, led me to form the opinion that this was an area that would benefit from a research project such as this.

I consider that having limited personal experiences of the process prior to commencing the project has been beneficial, as I did not need to concern myself with the relationship between myself and what was being researched.

#### **4.7 Data Analysis**

Ideally, the analysis of data should be consistent and compatible with the underlying philosophy of the research (Roche, 1997). In qualitative research this notion of congruence assumes that

data collection and analysis is a simultaneous activity (Merriam, 1998; Powney & Watts, 1987). Unlike statistical analysis there are few fixed formula or 'cookbook' recipes to guide data analysis in case study research (Yin, 1994). The ultimate goal is to treat the evidence fairly, produce compelling analytic conclusions and to rule out alternative interpretations. Regardless of the specific strategies used, four key principles define effective data analysis:

1. Analysis should show that it relied upon all the relevant evidence.
2. Analysis should take account of all major rival interpretations.
3. Analysis should address the most significant aspect(s) of the case study.
4. The investigator should be able to bring one's own prior expert knowledge to the case study (Yin, 1994, p. 123).

When undertaking qualitative research, the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis and is charged with the task of uncovering the meaning contained in the collected data by searching for "trends, patterns and relationships that are relevant to the research question" (Sarantakos, 1993, p. 297). Analysis means taking something apart and giving meaning to first impressions as well as to final compilations (Stake, 1995), and involves the researcher searching for convergent and divergent opinions and seeking explanations for the discrepancies, and being able to interpret the findings because of his or her familiarity with the data.

Given the emergent nature of a qualitative design (Merriam, 1998) "there is no particular moment when data analysis begins" (Stake, 1995, p. 71); collection and analysis should be simultaneous (Keeves & Sowden, 1997; Merriam, 1998) and ongoing. Data analysis is an inductive process of identifying themes that are generated from the data, and involves the developing, testing and changing of propositions by:

... the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview scripts, field notes and other materials ... to increase your own understanding of them and to present what you have discovered to others (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 153).

There are many approaches available for researchers to utilise as a means of analysing and interpreting data. The approach selected for use in this study to develop and verify theory is the *constant comparative method* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) in which the researcher simultaneously codes and analyses data in order to build propositions which are later refined, discarded or fully developed depending on the data which is progressively collected (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).

The advantage of the *constant comparative method* is that it offers a systematic approach to collecting, organising and analysing data from the empirical world in question (Curry, 1999):

The basic strategy of the method is to do just what the name implies – constantly compare. The researcher begins with a particular incident from an interview, field notes, or document and compares it with another incident in the same set of data or in another set. These comparisons lead to tentative categories ... Comparisons are constantly made ... until a theory can be formulated (Merriam, 1998, p. 159).

Having identified the case and the participants in Phase 1, the analytical process began in Phase 2 by gathering and organising the interview audio recordings and researcher's notes and organising them by school. Each interview was transcribed and re-read several times to identify the major categories contained in the script. Each of the transcripts was coded on a comment by comment basis with the aim of producing concepts that fitted the data. Code notes were written in a right hand margin of the transcript sheets (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973).

Cross-interview analysis was undertaken to identify regularly occurring concepts across the interviews within each of the schools. These concepts were presented back to the participants individually for member checking. A number of substantive concepts were identified across the case. The result was a list of key words, sentences and phrases clustered around essential concepts (Tesch, 1990). These concepts formed the basis of the survey questionnaire (Appendix 3).

Analysis of the data gathered with the aid of the survey questionnaire in Phase 3 took two forms. Comments were collated in school groups prior to being grouped together and analysed as a case. The scores listed on the Likert scales were collated and coded and transferred to SPSS for statistical analysis (SPSS Inc, 1997). The SPSS package was used to generate a range of descriptive data and to provide the frequency of responses expressed in percentages, as well as the mean score, standard deviation and number of valid cases for each item (Tinsey, 1998). These data provided a means within which to describe the outcomes of the research, and to suggest avenues for closer examination and analysis (Griffiths, 1998).

An important element of the data analysis involved the examination of the significance of the relationships between scale scores and certain identified characteristics of the participants. It was postulated that the participant characteristics would have an influence on their perspective

of CSR, and that the relationship between certain characteristics and the scale scores would prove to be significant (Griffiths, 1998).

Concepts underpinning most of the data began to be developed and the research themes and propositions refined until they were ready to be integrated into the exposition presented in subsequent chapters.

#### **4.8 Ethical Considerations**

As research involves interaction between researcher and participants, the researcher placed emphasis on giving appropriate consideration within the research design to the rights of the participants. Hence, the research was conducted within the standard ethical considerations of educational research (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993) and the policies of the Australian Catholic University Research Projects Ethics Committee. Ethical Approval was granted by this committee. The study was set within the context of systemic schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton, and so approval was also sought and granted from the Diocesan Director of Rockhampton Catholic Education and the principals of the four primary schools which comprise the case.

When undertaking social research it is necessary for participants to be assured that participation is voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time, that confidentiality will be assured, that the participant's identity will be protected and that no harm will come to the participant. Prior to the interviews and prior to completing the questionnaires, the participants were verbally informed of these rights and were asked to give their informed consent (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993). Each of the interviewees and those responding to the survey questionnaire was allocated a pseudonym for anonymity (Treston, 1983). Each of the schools was also identified with a pseudonym. Audio-taped data, survey questionnaires and any notes, transcripts and other printed materials were stored in a locked filing cabinet located in the principal supervisor's office at Australian Catholic University. It was acknowledged that from time to time ethical dilemmas may arise and that there would be a need to solve them "in the immediacy of the situation" (Punch, 2000, p. 84). However, no ethical dilemmas arose.

#### **4.9 Design Summary**

A predominantly qualitative approach to research was chosen because such an approach is consistent with the type of information and understanding sought regarding the personal perspectives of staff members involved in the examination phase of CSR. The theoretical perspective adopted is an interpretive paradigm which incorporates the orientations of constructionism and symbolic interactionism.

A case study methodology was undertaken as it offered the opportunity to study particular phenomena from a variety of perspectives. A range of research instruments was used to attempt to ensure internal trustworthiness and consistency.

Table 4.3 provides a general overview of the research design.

**Table 4.3 Summary of the Research Design**

Data Collection			Data Analysis	
Source of Information	Method	When	How	When
<b><u>Stage 1</u></b>				
Existing School Renewal documents	Archival research and document analysis to identify schools for case	January 2001		
School Renewal register	Personal contact with principals of identified schools	February 2001		
School principals	Letters of invitation and explanation to possible participants	February 2001		
Individual staff members				
<b><u>Stage 2</u></b>				
<b><u>School 1:</u></b>				
Teaching staff N = 4	Semi-structured interviews with individuals during one visit to each school.	School visits during March 2001	Multiple listenings to audio tapes	March & April 2001
Non Teaching staff N = 3				
<b><u>School 2:</u></b>				
Teaching staff N = 4	Some interviews were recorded on audiotapes. Other interviews were recorded by the researcher taking notes		Typing transcripts of every interview	
Non Teaching staff N = 3				
<b><u>School 3:</u></b>				
Teaching staff N = 5	Member checks	School visits during April 2001	Tentative interpretations	
Non Teaching staff N = 5				
<b><u>School 4:</u></b>				
Teaching staff N = 4	Discussion of the text		Editing text where necessary	April & May 2001
Non Teaching staff N = 0				
	Feedback		Tentative interpretations	
	Participants comments were recorded in note form by the researcher		Synthesis of text	
<b><u>Stage 3</u></b>				
<b><u>Schools 1 - 4</u></b>	Development & trial of Survey Questionnaire	May & June 2001	Intuitive-rational Approach	



<p><b><u>Stage 4</u></b>  <u>School 1:</u>  Teaching staff N = 8  Non Teaching staff N = 5  <u>School 2:</u>  Teaching staff N = 7  Non Teaching staff N = 4  <u>School 3:</u>  Teaching staff N = 10  Non Teaching staff N = 7  <u>School 4:</u>  Teaching staff N = 18  Non Teaching staff N = 9</p>	<p>Survey Questionnaire</p> <p>Group presentations at 3 of the schools</p> <p>Individual presentations at 1 of the schools</p>	<p>School visits during June &amp; July 2001</p> <p>School visits during August 2001</p>	<p>Collation and analysis of comments</p> <p>Collation of <i>Likert Scale</i> responses</p> <p>Initial analysis of data using commercial program</p>	<p>June &amp; July 2001</p> <p>August 2001</p> <p>September 2001</p>
<p><b><u>Stage 5</u></b>  <u>Schools 1 – 4</u></p>	<p>Feedback Participants comments were recorded in note form by the researcher</p>	<p>School visits during September &amp; October</p>	<p>Editing text where necessary</p> <p>Tentative research findings</p> <p>Synthesis of text</p>	<p>October &amp; November 2001</p>
<p><b><u>Stage 5</u></b>  <u>Schools 1 – 4</u></p>	<p>Feedback Participants comments were recorded in note form by the researcher</p>	<p>School visits during May – July 2002</p>	<p>Editing text where necessary</p> <p>Synthesis of text</p>	<p>July – September 2002</p>

## **Chapter Five**

### **Analysis and Presentation of Data**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This study explored how Catholic School Renewal is perceived by some staff members in four primary schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton. Specifically, the problem was explored from the personal perspectives of staff members from a selection of those school communities that undertook the examination phase of the Catholic School Renewal process.

Chapter Four was concerned with methodological issues and served as a means of explaining that the research methods adopted for this study were the semi structured interview and the survey questionnaire. The purpose of this chapter is to present an analysis of the data gathered in order to explore CSR in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton from the personal perspectives of staff members from a selection of those primary schools that undertook the examination phase of the CSR process. It is appropriate that the analyses of the data gathered from each of the research methods be presented separately because each of the research methods constituted a specific phase of the research, and because the analyses of the data gathered from the interviews were used to inform the structure and content of the survey questionnaire.

#### **5.2 Analysis of Interview Data**

It is crucial that the researcher practises active and accepting listening throughout the interview session (Burns, 1997; Stake, 1995). Therefore it was decided that whenever participants were willing, the interviews would be audio-taped as this approach allows the researcher to have a full and accurate record of the interview, and allows for the interviewer and the interviewee to assume a more relaxed mode. Of the twenty-eight participants, nineteen agreed to be audio-taped.

During transcription, the interview data were edited in order to explicate the main phenomena that might be included in the narrative or to identify aspects that needed further discussion. In order to achieve this, the researcher worked “back and forth between interview notes and sections of the [audio-] tape” (Patton, 1990, p. 350), being careful to preserve important quotations. The same process was undertaken when transcribing interviews where interview notes were the sole means of recording.

### 5.2.1 St Mary's

It was evident that the principal of St Mary's had given the Interview Schedule *to* each of the participants at St Mary's in advance, and that they had therefore been able to reflect on the nine questions listed. Although the document clearly stated that the questions were "designed to be a focus for discussion, but not intended to limit or confine feedback" (Appendix 2), four of the six participants clearly responded to the questions only and did allow the questions to "limit or confine feedback" (Appendix 2).

Of the six participants, Rosa, the long serving school secretary, perceived the process very differently from the five teaching staff, none of whom had been at the school for longer than five years. Rosa saw the process very much as one of accountability, stating that:

.. it allows for an opportunity for reflection, and for us to embrace and discover if we are doing the right thing. Teachers need to be assessed to see that they are doing the right thing. ... It brings the Catholicity and the practice together and it is a form of accountability .... Everyone has to be inspected at some time – we have simply changed the name ... Everyone needs to be assessed, and therefore surely something must come of it.

Rosa believed the process to be life-giving and direction setting and was comfortable with the EVT believing that, while the External Report did not go into enough depth, it was useful. Rosa believed that any negatives were caused by the school administration and not the process:

... division has come about as a result of the Catholic School Renewal. There is a group of parents versus the school administration. This is possibly a result of the secrecy that the principal surrounded the [External] Report in. The sense of secrecy has caused suspicion, which has led to divisiveness.

Of the five teachers interviewed, at least four of them agreed that:

1. *The process was not credible.*
2. *The External Report was untrue.*
3. *The process was stressful.*
4. *The model should be changed.*
5. *There should be fewer supervisors and more practitioners.*
6. *The process was not a source of growth.*
7. *The process had a negative effect on the school.*

Stella was not prepared to acknowledge that the process had any credibility, stating that:

... it was too quick. The panel members came together, whizzed into the school, whizzed in and out of people's classes and came up with all these recommendations at the end of the second day. I felt it was too quick.

Quentin added that the process "is too top heavy" and Tara suggested that "the actual week of renewal hasn't achieved much except highlighting things that we already knew".

The External Report received plenty of criticism, with all of the teachers identifying it as untrue. Particular comments included:

I felt it could have been quite dangerous as a lot of the recommendations could have been used as ammunition. A lot of it was untrue. They were either untrue or because they didn't see it happening in the few days that they were here, they said that we needed to develop in different areas – we were already doing them ... We have such a great school, that we felt deflated and depressed when [the principal] read the report (Stella).

Then the ultimate was the document we got in the end being so heavily loaded with recommendations and not so commendations. Straight away got our backs up. This is what they think of us. We've only done so much well and we've got all this to improve (Violet).

The external visit and final report was not recognised by me or the staff overall – in particular the teaching staff ... They didn't recognise it as this school ... There is no empathy in our report because these people have none – they are in an office ... The so-called experts were trying to baffle us with bullshit. Some of it we couldn't understand (Quentin).

This view was supported by Tara who stated that "it should be more direct and to the point, also to just a few areas, not a whole list of things which is not what St Mary's is about in my eyes" and Ursula's comment that "when the final report came back it had so many recommendations that it was quite off putting".

Violet and Stella were most offended by the level of stress that they perceived to be associated with the process:

I guess the thing that I found about renewal was that we stressed from the start of the year till the end of the year. So stress was the biggest thing. [The Regional Supervisor of Schools] did come in and tell us that it supposedly wasn't a stress thing. Right from the start it was (Violet).

I sort of felt that teachers were quite intimidated by the process. They were scared. They were worried about their programs, what would be said to them, their teaching strategies and the whole thing of being on show – it frightens people (Stella).

Four of the teachers advocated that the model be changed. Quentin and Stella were the most vocal:

I think this diocese needs to decide whether we want inspection or renewal and to realise that you can't mix them together. You can't be renewing yourself in a life-giving, growth promoting way, and then overlay it with a 1960s style inspection model – they just don't fit ... as it is mandated that the Regional Supervisor of Schools be the chair of the panel [he] needs to be at that school for a fairly large amount of time leading up to the renewal so that the supervisor knows the background, what's going on, what's happening, has a real sense of the school. So that when panel members go off half-cocked based on one observation, the supervisor can say that you've seen this, however ... (Quentin).

How does Diocesan Catholic Education maintain a standard? They need to do something, but this is not successful ... the process could be improved by perhaps staying a while longer ... Skills on how to approach and speak to teachers in an appropriate way that isn't intimidating or threatening, so that people feel comfortable with the process ... Maybe it should be more driven by the school (Stella).

The composition of the EVT, the “panel of educators whose task was to validate the findings of the school community and add its own commendations and recommendations” (Doherty, 1992, p. 3) also came in for some harsh criticism:

The external team was pretty hopeless at being able to deal with people as part of the process. They are out of touch with how schools work ... In one school there was an APRE, a principal and I think they had a class teacher and the Regional Supervisor of Schools. Because those people were closer to the coalface, they had empathy, not the hardnosed, here it is, get in and fix it (Stella).

Violet commented that she objected to “the so called experts who haven't been teaching for so long coming in and judging us”, while Quentin had this to say:

.... [what] is the purpose of the external team when it consists all bar one member of supervisors, to push through system directives? Is it to impose that on a school? The saving grace was perhaps the principal member of the panel, although she has not even seen the external report.

Quentin added that the system is:

Asking for trouble when you have three supervisors and one principal. They don't have grass roots understanding. You really need an experienced APRE from a school of similar size; yes, you need a principal from a school of similar size. Yes, your supervisor from the region ... and the fourth member I think just a good practising teacher who can empathise with teachers.

Comments indicating that the process was not a source of growth included Tara's comment that "No, it was not a life giving experience. It has not really proved to be a source of growth" and Ursula's "I don't believe it was a source of growth for the school. It put pressure on the staff. We have so much to get on with without the trivial". Again, Quentin was not satisfied with the process:

All this baloney about life giving, progress, "We're here to celebrate the great things you do". Well that's out the window. It was not life giving, it was highly threatening, it was rushed, and the actual panel was rushing here and there. The panel members were teaching lessons based on the last time they taught a class, which may have been 1971 or prior – talk and chalk! ... No interest in watching a class at work naturally. The meeting with me was fairly cursory, fairly shallow, barely touched upon the core developments that I wanted to pursue.

The last salient feature is that *The process had a negative effect on the school*. The researcher gleaned this from a synthesis of all of the interviews and specific comments by individual participants. Quentin summed up the feelings of the teaching staff with:

As far as the whole process went it's actually a source of death and I think that school communities do well to spin it so that it actually turns into growth. If you took it as it stands you could kill teachers' willingness to get in and have a go – they could say "I'm doing this, I'm trying my guts out and look at this, look what we get".

### **5.2.2 St Finbar's**

Four participants were interviewed at St Finbar's. All were members of the teaching staff. Of the four, three agreed that:

1. *The process was time consuming*
2. *The process was labour intensive*
3. *The school community did not have ownership of the process*
4. *The school community needs more expertise with regard to the process*
5. *The process did not improve outcomes*
6. *The process should be changed*

The concerns regarding the amount of time expended on the process were expressed in terms of personal time commitments by staff members who believed that they could have used their time more profitably. Cathy stated "I don't think that three terms of work is justified", which is similar to Bertha's reflection, "I wonder how effective it was for the amount of time that went into it" and "It required our own personal time to get surveys back and to collate

them”. Aileen also wondered about the time commitment, saying “I don’t know if the process that we use is the best use of our time ... we seem to have spent a lot of time with this renewal fiddling with paper”. Her annoyance with the system authorities is evident in the following:

The process itself seems to have taken up a lot of time. The supervisor gave us an untrue indication of how much time it would take up. He should have been upfront. Tends to make people a little suspicious.

With reference to the process being labour intensive, Bertha’s comments sum up the feelings of three of the four teaching staff:

It was my first time going through renewal. It was an interesting experience. I thought surely it couldn’t be that hectic. However, I discovered that everything everyone had said was true. It did require a lot of work, our time. ... I was happy with the process, but not the workload. ... We had to do our normal workload at the same time.

While not stating that the staff did not have ownership of the process, Dominic said that “The process should be more the staff looking at how we do this and how can we improve” as opposed to the various sections of the school community having a say. The other three members of the teaching staff did not believe that they had ownership of the process. Bertha reflected that, “I guess I got the feeling that it was imposed on us ... It’s not a choice the school would have made unless pushed”. Cathy commented that “The process was done for the DCEO ... we did not have ownership of it”, and went on to further comment that “Teachers don’t need to own it – they don’t give a hoot. Tell me what questions to ask and I’ll ask them!” Aileen mirrored these thoughts when she said “I would think that most people did not have ownership of it. Here it is, let’s do it – driven by DCEO”. Aileen questioned whether or not teachers need to own the process, and if ownership is over-rated.

Cathy was frustrated by her lack of knowledge of the process from the beginning, articulating this frustration as follows:

The information we got was shoddy ... We didn’t know where to go ... We wanted to know where to go – what’s first etc? ... I didn’t feel that we were given enough direction on whom to survey, what to include, when and so on.

Dominic’s thoughts continue with this theme:

My staff's idea of the process really comes from me; whether they agree with it or like it or not. No one comes in and clarifies the purpose, the reason etc. This is a short-coming. The idea of really clarifying the purpose of why we are going through this process is essential. That is a big part of the problem. When people see the purpose and the end point, it is seen as worthwhile. We need an articulation of the purpose from the DCEO.

Three of the teaching staff (Aileen, Bertha, & Cathy) expressed the view that the process did not improve outcomes for children and two (Aileen & Cathy) believed that it was undertaken for the DCEO. Dominic stated, "I have no hard evidence that outcomes have improved", but he went on to say "we've made some changes that we believe are for the better as a result [of the process]".

St Finbar's had one salient feature in common with St Mary's. This was Feature 6: *The process should be changed.*

The participants from St Finbar's had some strong opinions about the need for a changed model. During the course of her interview, Cathy alluded to the need for change on seven occasions including:

I have a problem with the process. There needs to be a process, but I'm not committed to this one ... My objection is that there must be an easier way to get the same result. The concept is good but not the process ... If we are going to do it how we do, there needs to be stricter rules about what you're there for, what you can ask and what turns up in the [external] report. It needs to be done a different way, maybe an area or two every year ... No need for books like this [internal report].

Aileen alluded to the need for change five times:

If you're going to have a process it should be the same for us as every other school. We do need to have some sort of process for our renewal, but I don't know what it is ... How else can we be accountable? How to make it personal and something that people want to do ... Are you [the EVT] allowed to just show up and say "I'm here this week?" – a true indicator.

Dominic was of the view that there should be a commitment to clarifying the existing process, more so than to developing a different process. He also suggested that "We [all schools in the Diocese] should be working from the same core questions, with the freedom to add whatever is necessary for individual schools". The latter view was also expressed by Cathy.

With reference to the EVT, Dominic shared his insights:



The make up [of the EVT] I don't agree with. The make up of the team here was good as it had only one supervisor. It has to be practising people who know and can read between the lines – I think that's really important. With all due respect to supervisors, whilst they do have a lot of expertise, it could be said that some of them might be out of touch. Also, once you remove yourself from the school situation for a while you become polarised as to what should be happening, and if its not, why isn't it? In my view it should be people in the field and to a certain degree people who will stand up for themselves and not be railroaded.

### 5.2.3 St Kevin's

Seven participants were interviewed at St Kevin's. Three of the participants were non-teachers and four were members of the teaching staff. As a group, these participants were quite content with the process that they had undertaken. Of the twenty-three salient features, only one featured in more than fifty percent of the interviews:

*That there should be fewer supervisors and more practitioners*

The four participants who identified this were the four teachers interviewed. Fred suggested that “we change the composition of the external team to include fewer educators”, believing that members of the general community who are not ‘educational experts’ would be able to bring a fresh view to the process. Alan believed that “The wrong people are involved in the supervision of it. We don't need office bound, out of touch people. We need ‘on the ground’, switched on people”. Donna had some suggestions, stating that “The entry style of the Regional Supervisor can be negative and jeopardise the rest of the process” and that:

The current process is open to the interpretation of the Regional Supervisor and as such cannot be uniform. We should have a Catholic School Renewal Officer for the diocese to ensure a generic person on all renewals.

This is supported by a comment made by Evelyn: “There is no consistency between supervisors' understandings of the process and therefore the implementation of the process”. Donna further commented that “The process is too top heavy with not enough practitioners involved. It is good to involve our peer principals. It is good for peer principals' professional development”.

The other salient feature worthy of mention is *Change the Process*. Although only mentioned by three of the seven participants, these were three of the four teaching staff.

Fred was concerned about the length of the examination phase of the process and made some suggestions on how it could be improved:

The process is too long. It uses up too much of the energy of the school. Energy was pumped into it for too long – from when we started the surveys until the end. On the other hand, you could extend the visits over a longer period of time. But don't disrupt the kids; it is disruptive enough for the adults.

Donna was not happy with the current process:

We do need some form of quality assurance, but not this. Let's be honest and up front about the process and its purpose. The current process is open to the interpretation of the Regional Supervisor and as such cannot be uniform [across the diocese]. Catholic School Renewal cuts into much needed fallow time. It doesn't allow for the natural processes of both growth and stagnation. I believe that DCEO sells us a furphy by stating that it's about growth when it is really about quality assurance.

Donna went on to suggest (a) the employment of a CSR Officer and (b) the involvement of more practitioners on EVT's (as reported earlier in this section).

Alan afforded the process no credibility believing it to be beyond repair, stating:

One of the many problems is that the process is the focus, not the outcomes. It [the process] lacks a focus. It is about rhetoric not reality and is consumed by documentation and has nothing to do with teaching and learning. The process is an outside instigated and driven process and can therefore be looked upon with a dismissive attitude. It could be improved by being abandoned.

#### **5.2.4 St Michael's**

Eleven participants were interviewed at St Michael's: Three were members of the non-teaching staff, with the remaining eight being teachers. The participants were generally happy with the process, with only two of the salient features being mentioned in more than fifty percent of the interviews. These were:

1. *The process was stressful*
2. *The external team was good/capable*

Of the six participants who regarded stress as a salient feature of the examination phase of the process, five were members of the teaching staff; the other was the School Secretary Bertha, who had been very involved in the administration of the examination phase. Bertha reported on her perceptions of the school generally, stating that:

A lot of people were overly stressed out. Classroom visits and planning seem to be the worse cause of stress. Stress is the biggest problem. The stress was during the week or two beforehand and the actual week of the visit.

Although the teachers did mention stress as a factor, the following comments illustrate that it was not seen as an overly negative factor. Ophelia made an observation that “the stress came in when we were getting it [the internal report] typed up”. Bertha commented that “the only negative that I noticed was the stress that everyone, staff generally, was under”, a comment supported by Irene’s observation that “the only negative is that it is a bit of a pressure thing regarding class teaching, as you were holding back waiting for the visitor. There was less flexibility than usual”. In the same vein, Lorraine said, “the process certainly caused a degree of stress as we had to rearrange timetables to suit the external team visit. The visit did cause a certain amount of disruption at the school”. Pamela, new to both the school and the system, “was stressed because I didn’t know what was going to happen. But [the EVT member] was wonderful and put me at ease”.

Positive comments about the EVT included:

”The external team was good” (Genevieve).

“The external team was not intrusive in my experience” (Pamela).

“The panel was definitely okay and put me at ease ... I was very much at ease with all of the people on the Panel” (Irene).

“The external team was unobtrusive, friendly and easy to get on with” (Lorraine).

“The interviewers were quite qualified to do the interviews” (Katie).

“The external team was really good. They were trying to put us at ease” (Bertha).

“The team was fine with a great approach. They need freer timetables so that they can stay mentally fresh” (Mary).

The EVT at St Michael’s was comprised of three supervisors and one principal. The only comment in relation to the composition of the EVT was that “The supervisors are experienced people with a view – that’s useful” (Harry).

### **5.3 Summary of Analysis of Interview Data**

After analysing the data gathered from the use of the semi-structured interviews school by school, it is evident that the participants at two of the schools had a far less positive view of the process of CSR than their colleagues at the other two schools. Using 50% of participants

as a benchmark, the following table represents how many common responses were identified at each school:

**Table 5.1 Common Responses per School**

School	Number of common responses
St Mary's	7
St Finbar's	6
St Kevin's	1
St Michael's	2

The common responses were:

**Table 5.2 Common Responses**

School	Common Responses
St Mary's	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The process was not credible</li> <li>2. The external report was untrue</li> <li>3. The process was stressful</li> <li>4. The model should be changed</li> <li>5. There should be fewer supervisors and more practitioners</li> <li>6. The process was not a source of growth</li> <li>7. The process had a negative effect on the school</li> </ol>
St Finbar's	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The process was time consuming</li> <li>2. The process was labour intensive</li> <li>3. The school community did not have ownership of the process</li> <li>4. The school community needs more expertise with regard to the process</li> <li>5. The process did not improve outcomes</li> <li>6. The process should be changed</li> </ol>
St Kevin's	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There should be fewer supervisors and more practitioners</li> </ol>
St Michael's	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The process was stressful</li> <li>2. The external team was good/capable</li> </ol>

The comments made by the staff members at St Mary's and St Finbar's were often quite scathing.

The external report was described as "dangerous" and "untrue" at St Mary's, with the principal stating that "the external visit and the final report were not recognised by me or the staff". He added, as a criticism of the EVT, "there is no empathy in our report because these people have none". Other staff members commented on the EVT as "pretty hopeless" and "out of touch with how schools work". The principal stated that the system is "asking for trouble when you have [as the EVT] three supervisors and one principal". Comments

directed at the process generally included that “teachers were quite intimidated by the process” and that “It is not life giving, it was highly threatening” and “a source of death”.

The staff at St Finbar’s were upset at the time commitment needed and the labour intensity of the process. However, this was compounded by the perception that “the supervisor gave us an untrue indication of how much time it [CSR] would take up”, and that the “information we got [from the Regional Supervisor of Schools] was shoddy”. It was evident that the staff members at St Finbar’s did not have ownership of the process and believed that it “was driven by DCEO”, who in turn did not “clarify the process” or provide “an articulation of the purpose”.

The salient feature shared by St Mary’s and St Finbar’s was that *the process should be changed*. The motivation for this is that “there must be an easier way to get the same result”.

Three of the four teachers interviewed at St Kevin’s advocated for *change the process*. St Kevin’s only had one salient feature mentioned by fifty percent of staff. This salient feature was *that there should be fewer supervisors and more practitioners*. This response relates to the St Mary’s *change the process* response, which is also a suggested change.

Some thoughts in relation to *there should be fewer supervisors and more practitioners* include Fred’s belief that fewer “educational experts” would benefit the process. Alan was far more critical in stating that “We don’t need office bound, out of touch people”. The principal of St Kevin’s strongly advocated for a Diocesan Catholic School Renewal Officer to bring diocesan-wide consistency to the process.

With reference to *changing the process*, it was noted that “the process is far too long” and “cannot be uniform”. Alan believes that it is “an outside instigated and driven process and can therefore be looked upon with a dismissive attitude”. He suggested that the process could be improved “by being abandoned”.

The staff at St Michael’s were generally happy with the process. The only negative salient feature was that *the process was stressful*, although the comments were not very forceful and can be summed up by Irene’s observation that “it is a bit of a pressure thing”.

Comments made by the St Michael’s staff about EVT members were in contrast with many of the comments from other schools. The St Michael’s comments were positive, and came from more than fifty percent of staff members. Interestingly, the EVT at St Michael’s was comprised of three supervisors and one principal (a composition that received criticism at the other schools), and the only comment about the composition of the EVT was a complimentary comment: “The supervisors are experienced people with a view – that’s useful”.

The researcher identified twenty-three issues that were common to, or salient features of, more than one of the four schools that comprise the case. The comments and the number of participants for whom they were a salient feature (n = 28) are presented as Table 5.3.

**Table 5.3 Salient Features of the Semi-structured Interviews**

Salient Feature	Number of Participants
The process is credible	7
The process is not credible	9
We received a good report	6
We received a bad/untrue report	6
The process was stressful	13
The process has not improved outcomes	7
The process has proved to be a source of growth	4
The process has not been a source of growth	6
The External team was good/capable	13
The External team was not good/capable	4
The process was simply an inspection	5
The process was time consuming	6
The process was labour intensive	9
School Renewal is a good concept	6
We need to be accountable	8
The process had a negative effect on the school	6
We had ownership of the process	7
Implementation of the process is too open to interpretation	5
There should be more collaboration before the Report is final	4
The model should be changed	12
School communities need to be more informed about the process	4
Involve more practitioners and fewer supervisors	10
The process is DCEO imposed/driven	7

The salient features were further analyzed into themes related to the research questions.

**Table 5.4 Further Analysis of Salient Features**

<b>How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a source of potential growth?</b>
The process has proved to be a source of growth
The process has not proved to be a source of growth
<b>How does the process of Catholic School Renewal ensure quality Catholic education?</b>
The process has not improved outcomes
The process is credible
The process is not credible
<b>How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a useful quality assurance tool?</b>
The process was stressful
The process was time consuming
The process was labour intensive

The salient features identified in Table 5.4 were used to inform the development of the survey questionnaire.

#### **5.4 Survey Questionnaire**

In order to reach a large number of participants it was appropriate to engage the survey questionnaire as a research method. It is also useful as a method because it is inexpensive, produces quick results, allows for flexibility, provides a consistency and uniformity, and facilitates reflection and thought (Coughlan, 1998).

The researcher implemented a three-stage procedure for the development of the survey questionnaire (Figure 4.4). This involved identifying the salient features for the participants (Stage 1), examining the salient features and developing an appropriate five-point Likert scale (Stage 2), redrafting the survey questionnaire a number of times, field testing it, refining it, and developing a final version (Stage 3).

##### **5.4.1 Selection of Participants to the Survey Questionnaire**

In order to continue the purposeful sampling (Patton, 2002) undertaken when selecting participants in the interviews, the researcher developed a set of criteria (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993) for the selection of participants to respond to the survey questionnaire. Table 5.5 provides a summary of the participants. Further details are provided in Table 4.2.

**Table 5.5 Summary of Survey Questionnaire Participants**

<b>School</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Other Staff</b>	<b>Total</b>
St Mary's	10	7	17
St Finbar's	18	9	27
St Kevin's	8	5	13
St Michael's	7	4	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>68</b>

Forty-three (63.2%) of the participants were teachers and twenty-five (36.8%) were non-teaching staff.

### **5.5 Analysis of Survey Questionnaire Data**

The data analysed in this section were collected using a context-specific pen and paper survey questionnaire (Appendix 3), the design and refinement of which has been described earlier. The purpose of the questionnaire was to gather information from school staff members about their perceptions of CSR as they had recently experienced it (Appendix 3).

Data gathered were analysed using the SPSS package (SPSS Inc., 1997). Means and standard deviations were calculated for each Likert scale and comparisons made between the results. The survey questionnaire orchestrated the gathering of data using ten dependent measures and four independent measures. The ten dependent measures were the items in questions 1 to 6 (Questions 4 and 6 had three items each) and employed the use of appropriate Likert Scales. Questions 7 and 8 offered the opportunity for participants to provide written comments.

The four independent measures were:

1. Gender (male or female)
2. Role (teacher or other staff)
3. Age (20 – 30, 31 – 40, 41 – 50, 51+)
4. School (St Mary's, St Finbar's, St Kevin's, St Michael's)

The ten dependent measures were the questions:

1. It is claimed that Catholic School Renewal is an ongoing and continuous cycle over a four or five year period of time. To what extent has this been your experience?



2. To what extent has it been your experience that the Catholic School Renewal process assures parents that their children have access to a quality Catholic education?
3. In your opinion how much ownership did the staff of your school have of the most recent Catholic School Renewal process?
4. It is claimed that the Catholic School Renewal process is a source of growth. In your experience how effective has the process been as a source of growth:
  - i) Spiritually
  - ii) Personally
  - iii) Professionally
5. Drawing on your personal experience of Catholic School Renewal to what extent do you believe the process to be credible?
6. Please comment on the following with regard to the effect that the most recent examination phase of the Catholic School Renewal process at your school had:
  - i) Stress levels
  - ii) Time commitment
  - iii) Labour intensity

### **5.5.1 Gender**

As there are only two groups to be compared relating to gender, the t-test was deemed to be an appropriate technique for the comparison (Chase, 1967). The t-test is a useful procedure “for determining whether the means of samples A and B are sufficiently different to say that such a difference is unlikely as a result of chance selection of random samples” (Chase, 1967, p. 161). In all cases Levene’s test is not significant; therefore the standard form of t-test which assumes equal variances applies. In no case is the “equal variance assumed” t-test significant because  $p > .05$  in each case. It is therefore reasonable to remove gender from further consideration. However, it is acknowledged that of the 68 participants only 6 were males, and therefore the difference would have to be quite large to be statistically significant.

### **5.5.2 Role**

The two options for role were *teacher* or *other staff*. As there are only two options the t-test was deemed to be an appropriate technique for the comparison (Chase, 1967). In three of the questions (1, 3 and 6) Levene’s test indicates that  $p < .05$ , therefore the second form of the t-test whereby equal variances are not assumed is appropriate. The equal variances assumed

version of the t-test is used for the other questions. In no case is the t-test significant at a .05 level. On this basis role can be removed from further consideration, although it is sometimes used for illustrative purposes.

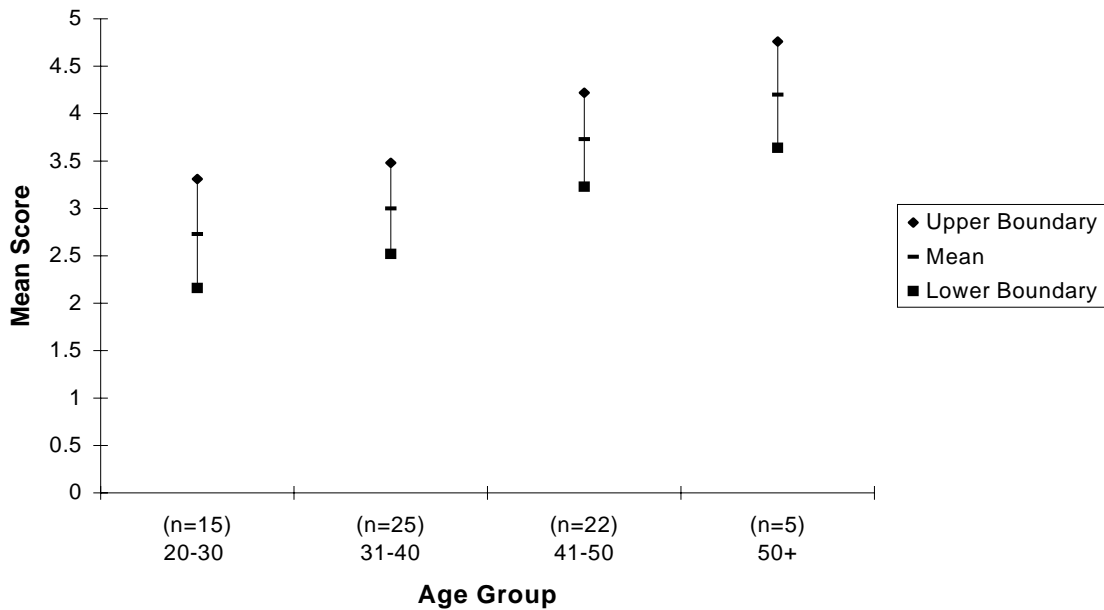
### 5.5.3 Age

The survey questionnaire was analysed using four age groups: 20 – 30, 31 – 40, 41 – 50 and 51+. As there are four groups it was appropriate to analyse this independent measure using “the most commonly used statistical tool in modern social and behavioural science” (Senter, 1969, p. 241), a technique called analysis of variance, or sometimes referred to by the acronym ANOVA, which “can actually be used to measure the association of two or *more* values” (Alreck & Settle, 2004, p. 311). “Analysis of variance is a technique used to test the equality of several means ... by dividing the variance into two components and then comparing them” (Lubov & Hamburg, 1979, p. 99). “When analysing the data from experiments that use more than two groups” (Pagano, 1990, p. 330) it is appropriate to use the F-test, which uses the variance of the data between groups and within groups for hypothesis testing (Levin & Fox, 2002; Pagano, 1990).

The F-tests were significant for Questions 1 and 10. Therefore the researcher applied post hoc comparison tests using the Scheffe procedure for both of these questions:

Question 1 It is claimed that Catholic School Renewal is an ongoing and continuous cycle over a four or five year period of time. To what extent has this been your experience?

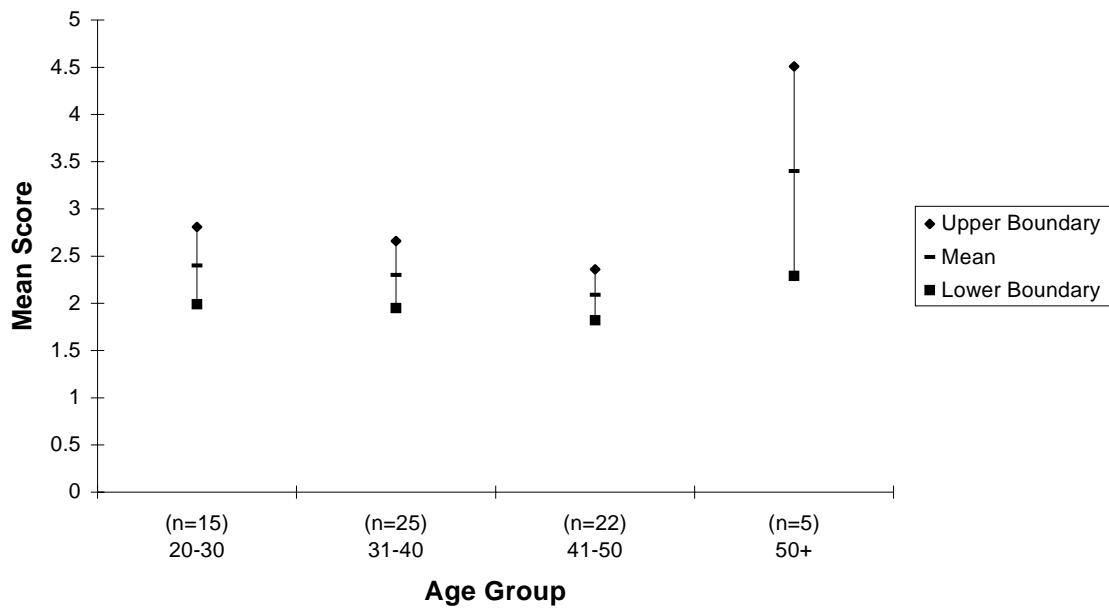
The responses to this question displayed statistically significant differences among the age groups ( $F_{(3,63)} = 4.27, p = .01$ ). Post hoc pairwise comparisons using the Scheffe procedure indicated that the youngest group (age 20 –30,  $n = 15$ ) reported a significantly lower mean (2.73) than the oldest group (age 50+,  $n = 5$ ) (4.20). The means for the age groups are shown in Figure 5.1:



**Figure 5.1** Means and 95% confidence Intervals for Participants in Four Age Groups to Question 1. “Catholic School Renewal is an ongoing and continuous cycle”

Question 6c Please comment on the following with regard to the effect that the recent examination phase of the Catholic School Renewal process at your school had – Labour intensity.

The responses to this question displayed statistically significant differences among the age groups ( $F_{(3,61)} = 4.27, p = .01$ ). Post hoc pairwise comparisons using the Scheffe procedure indicated that the third age group (age 41 –50,  $n = 22$ ) reported a significantly lower mean (2.09) than the oldest group (age 50+,  $n = 5$ ) (3.40). The means for the age groups are shown in Figure 5.2:



**Figure 5.2** Means and 95% Confidence Intervals for Participants in Four Age Groups to Question 6c. “Labour intensity”

#### 5.5.4 Schools

The *case* is comprised of four schools, referred to as St Mary’s, St Finbar’s, St Kevin’s and St Michael’s. As there are four schools, it was appropriate to analyse this independent measure using ANOVA and F-tests. The F-test results were significant for all of the questions except for Question 1. The results of the F-tests are presented as Table 5.6:

**Table 5.6** ANOVA Tests of Responses to 10 Questions on Catholic School Renewal from Four Schools

Question	F	d.f.*	p.	Sig.(at .05 level)
1. Q.1 Continuous cycle over 4 or 5 years	1.068	3,63	.369	Not Significant
2. Q.2. Assures parents of quality	5.490	3,64	.002	Significant
3. Q.3 Staff ownership of the process	3.269	3,59	.027	Significant
4. Q.4a Source of spiritual growth	5.154	3,64	.003	Significant
5. Q.4b Source of personal growth	2.808	3,63	.047	Significant
6. Q.4c Source of professional growth	5.812	3,62	.001	Significant
7. Q.5 A credible process	4.260	3,63	.008	Significant
8. Q.6a Stress levels at the school	4.503	3,59	.007	Significant
9. Q.6b Time commitment at the school	7.902	3,61	<.0005	Significant
10. Q.6c Labour intensity at the school	5.383	3,61	.002	Significant

\*d.f. Degrees of freedom for the F-test

Given the significance of the F-tests for Questions 2 to 6c, the researcher applied post hoc tests using the Scheffe procedure for the questions. The results of the post hoc tests for using

the Scheffe procedure for Questions 2 to 10 (2 to 6c) are presented in Figures 5.3 to 5.11. They are presented in the following order (Table 5.7) as they relate to the three central research questions:

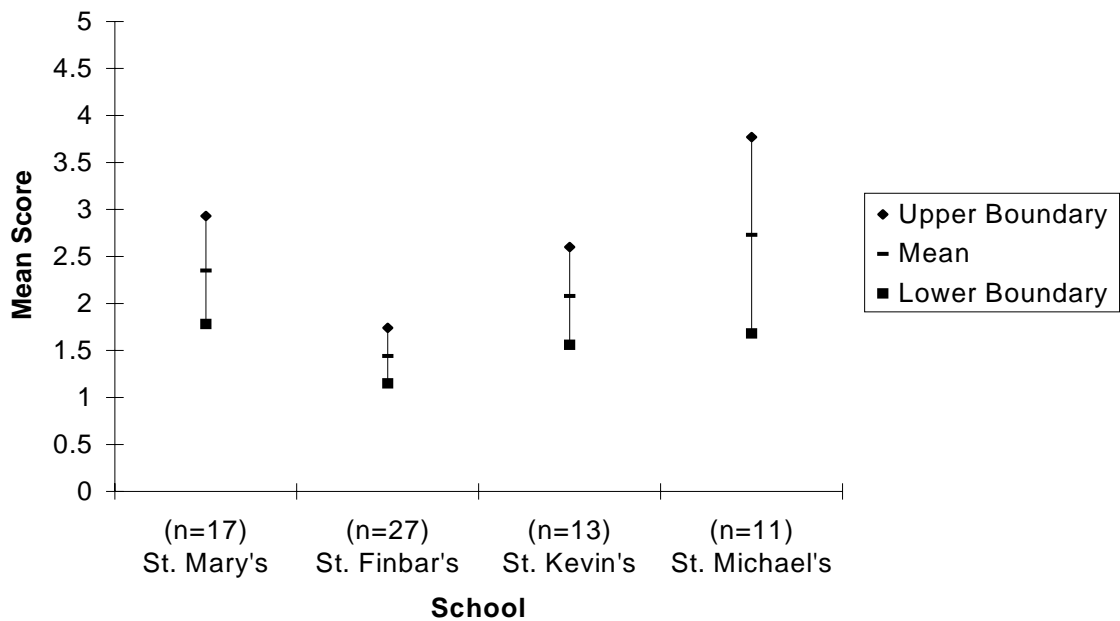
**Table 5.7 The Three Central Research Questions and the Survey Questionnaire Questions Related to Each**

<p><b>Research Question 1:</b> How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a “source of growth”?</p>
<p><b>Related survey questionnaire questions:</b> Q4a How effective has the process been as a source of growth spiritually? Q4b How effective has the process been as a source of growth personally? Q4c How effective has the process been as a source of growth professionally?</p>
<p><b>Research Question 2:</b> How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a way of ensuring quality Catholic education?</p>
<p><b>Related survey questionnaire question:</b> Q2 Does the process of Catholic School Renewal assure parents of quality Catholic education?</p>
<p><b>Research Question 3:</b> How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a useful quality assurance tool?</p>
<p><b>Related survey questionnaire questions:</b> Q 5 Is the process of Catholic School Renewal a credible process? Q6a The effect of the Catholic School Renewal process in terms of stress levels Q6b The effect of the Catholic School Renewal process in terms of time commitment Q6b The effect of the Catholic School Renewal process in terms of labour intensity</p>

**5.5.5 Research Question 1: How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a “source of growth”?**

Question 4a It is claimed that the Catholic School Renewal process is a source of growth. In your experience how effective has the process been as a source of growth: Spiritually?

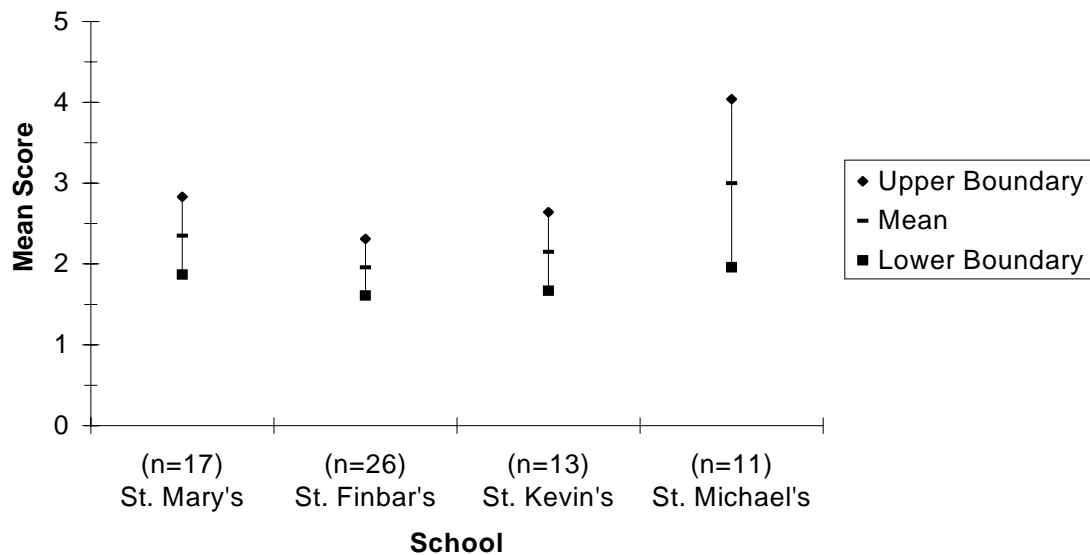
The responses to this question displayed statistically significant differences between schools ( $F_{(3,64)} = 5.154, p = .003$ ). Post hoc pairwise comparisons using the Scheffe procedure indicated that the mean response from St Finbar’s ( $n = 27$ ) which was 1.44 was lower than the mean of 2.73 reported from St Michael’s ( $n = 11$ ).



**Figure 5.3** Means and 95% Confidence Intervals for Participants from Four Schools to Question 4a: “How effective has the process been as a source of growth: Spiritually?”

Question 4b It is claimed that the Catholic School Renewal process is a source of growth. In your experience how effective has the process been as a source of growth: Personally?

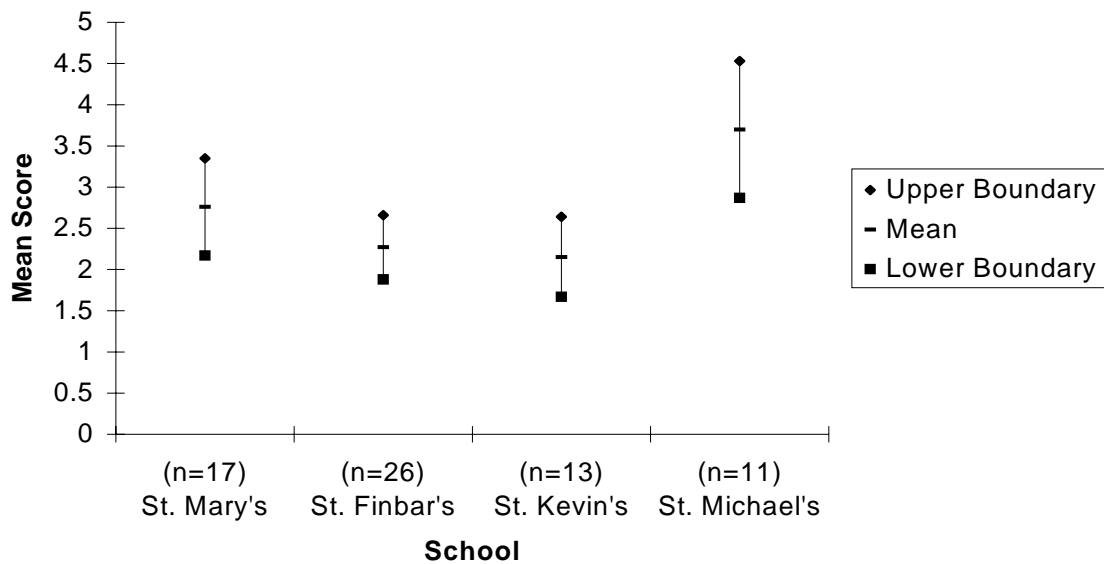
The responses to this question displayed statistically significant differences between schools ( $F_{(3,63)} = 2.808, p = .047$ ). There were no significant post hoc pairwise differences as assessed by the Scheffe procedure.



**Figure 5.4** Means and 95% Confidence Intervals for Participants from Four schools to question 4b: “How effective has the process been as a source of growth: Personally?”

Question 4c It is claimed that the Catholic School Renewal process is a source of growth. In your experience how effective has the process been as a source of growth: Professionally?

The responses to this question displayed statistically significant differences between schools ( $F_{(3,62)} = 5.812, p = .001$ ). Post hoc pairwise comparisons using the Scheffe procedure indicated that both St Finbar’s ( $n = 26$ ) with a mean of 2.27 and St Kevin’s ( $n = 13$ ) with a mean of 2.15 reported significantly lower means than the mean of 3.70 reported from St Michael’s ( $n = 10$ ).



**Figure 5.5 Means and 95% Confidence Intervals for Participants from Four Schools to Question 4c: “How effective has the process been as a source of growth: Professionally?”**

The general trend of the survey questionnaire responses to the question that relates to this research question is that the process of CSR is not a source of growth:

- 31% of participants believe that CSR is a source of spiritual growth;
- 37 % believe it to be a source of personal growth; and
- 53 % believe it to be a source of professional growth.

On a Likert scale where 1 represents *little or none* and 5 represents *excellent*, the mean scores were:

**Table 5.8 Mean Scores for Survey Questionnaire Questions Relating to Research Question 1**

Survey Questionnaire Question relating to Research Question 1	Mean Score
Catholic School Renewal is an effective source of spiritual growth	2.22
Catholic School Renewal is an effective source of personal growth	2.41
Catholic School Renewal is an effective source of professional growth	2.83

The percentages and mean scores indicate that generally the process of CSR is not seen as a source of growth. A further analysis of the mean scores, whereby the scores are analysed according to the school, and further as teachers and non-teachers, is presented as Table 5.9 below:



**Table 5.9 Mean Scores for Survey Questionnaire Questions Relating to Research Question 1 According to School and Role**

CSR is a source of:	St Mary's Teachers	St Mary's Non Teachers	St Finbar's Teachers	St Finbar's Non Teachers	St Kevin's Teachers	St Kevin's Non Teachers	St Michael's Teachers	St Michael's Non Teachers
Spiritual growth	2.4	2.25	1.72	1.22	2.27	2.5	3.16	2.2
Personal growth	2.2	2.57	2.11	1.63	2.44	2.0	3.83	2.5
Professional growth	2.8	2.63	2.57	2.5	2.67	2.0	4.18	3.25

The data presented in Table 5.9 (and Figures 5.3, 5.4 and 5.4) suggest that there are some statistically significant differences between results depending on the school. Although not statistically significant, there are noticeable differences depending on the role of the participants. The teachers at St Michael's regarded the examination phase of the CSR process most positively, being the only group to average 3 (*effective*) or better for all three questions. In response to *Personal growth* the average was 3.83, verging on *very effective*. For *Professional growth* the average was 4.18, indicating better than *very effective*.

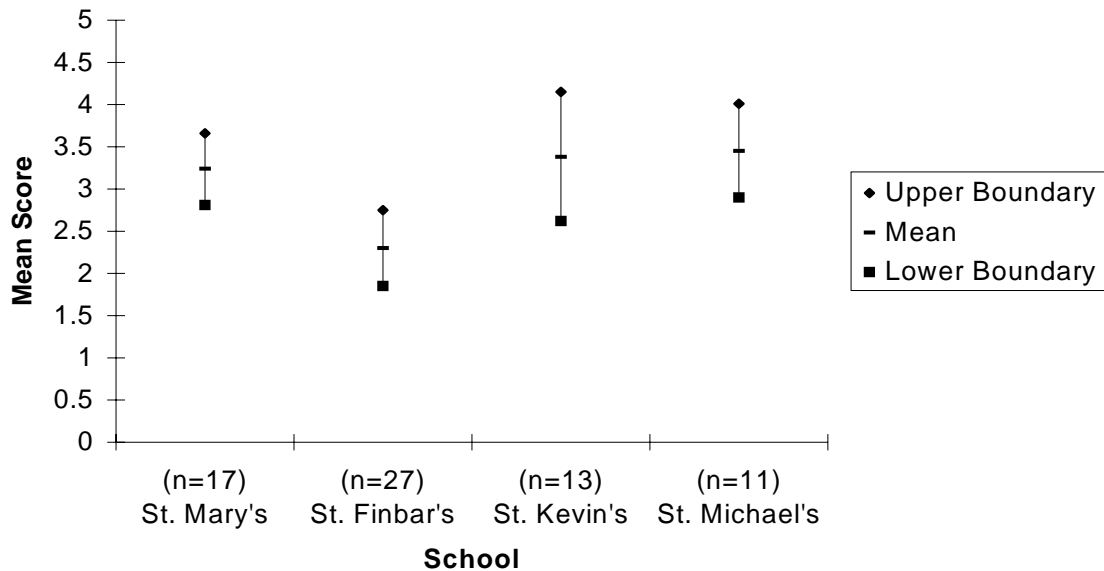
The teachers at St Finbar's recorded the least positive experience, dropping to below *somewhat effective* for *Spiritual growth*, and averaging between *somewhat effective* and *effective* for *Professional growth*. The teachers at St Mary's and St Kevin's indicate similar experiences, recording between 2.2 and 2.8 for the questions, with both groups averaging 2.46 over the three questions.

Of the non-teaching staff, St Michael's recorded the highest average of 2.65, with St Mary's recording 2.48 and St Kevin's 2.17. St Finbar's had a much lower average of 1.78. Of particular interest, the only school that recorded any mean scores representing *effective* or better, was St Michael's where the teachers indicated a 3 or better for each of the three questions, and the non-teaching staff recorded a 3.25 for *Professional growth*.

**5.5.6 Research Question 2: How does the process of Catholic School Renewal ensure quality Catholic education?**

Question 2 To what extent has it been your experience that the School Renewal process assures parents that their children have access to quality Catholic education?

The responses to this question displayed statistically significant differences between schools ( $F_{(3,64)} = 5.490, p = .002$ ). Post hoc pairwise comparisons using the Scheffe procedure indicated that the mean response of 2.30 from St Finbar's ( $n = 27$ ) was lower than the mean of 3.45 reported from St Michael's ( $n = 11$ ).



**Figure 5.6** Means and 95% Confidence Intervals for Participants from Four Schools to Question 2: “School Renewal Assures Parents of Quality”

The focus of the responses was on whether or not “parents” are “assured” of the “quality Catholic education”, rather than whether the process “ensure(s) quality Catholic education”. The responses to this question recorded the highest standard deviation (1.14) of the ten questions, thus explaining the results that follow.

The mean score for the question “*To what extent has it been your experience that the School Renewal Process assures parents that their children have access to quality Catholic education?*” was 2.95, a little below *to some degree* on the Likert scale. However, 69% of participants believe that the process does assure parents of quality. Table 5.10 represents the mean scores for the survey questionnaire question which relates to Research Question 2 according to school and role:

**Table 5.10** Mean Scores for Survey Questionnaire Question Relating to Research Question 2 According to School and Role

CSR assures:	St Mary's Teachers	St Mary's Non Teachers	St Finbar's Teachers	St Finbar's Non Teachers	St Kevin's Teachers	St Kevin's Non Teachers	St Michael's Teachers	St Michael's Non Teachers
Quality	3.0	3.58	2.5	2.11	2.88	4.21	3.17	3.75

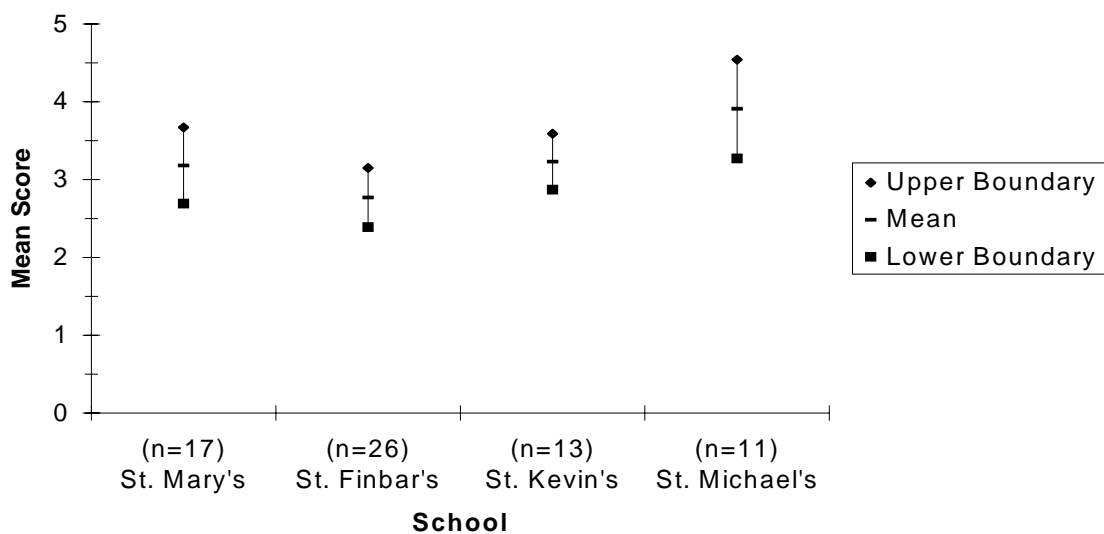
Table 5.10 shows that of the 8 identified groups of participants, 5 were of the opinion that the process does assure parents of quality at least *to some degree*. It is evident from the data that the staff of St Finbar’s had the least positive view of how the process assures parents of quality Catholic education. The results from the other three schools were similar to each other and indicated that the participants believe that the process of CSR does assure parents that their children have access to quality Catholic education.

**5.5.7 Research Question 3: How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a useful quality assurance tool?**

There are four questions contained in the survey questionnaire which are directed specifically at addressing this research question. The four questions focus on (a) the credibility of the process and (b) the effect that the examination phase had on stress levels, time commitment and labour intensity. The questions are divided into two groups, the first being the question which specifically asks if the process is credible, with the other three referring to the practicalities of undertaking the examination phase.

Question 5 Drawing on your personal experience of Catholic School Renewal to what extent do you believe the process to be credible?

The responses to this question displayed statistically significant differences between schools ( $F_{(3,63)} = 4.260, p = .008$ ). Post hoc pairwise comparisons using the Scheffe procedure indicated that the mean response from St Finbar’s ( $n = 26$ ) which was 2.77 was lower than the mean of 3.91 reported from St Michael’s ( $n = 11$ ).



**Figure 5.7 Means and 95% Confidence Intervals for Participants from Four Schools to Question 5: “As a credible process”**

In response to survey questionnaire question number 5, “Drawing on your personal experience of Catholic School Renewal to what extent do you believe the process to be credible”, 66 % of participants gave a positive response. This was reflected in the mean score which was 3.12, with 3 on the Likert scale representing *to some degree*. Table 5.11 represents the responses to this question:

**Table 5.11 Mean Scores for Survey Questionnaire Question 5 Relating to Research Question 3 According to School and Role**

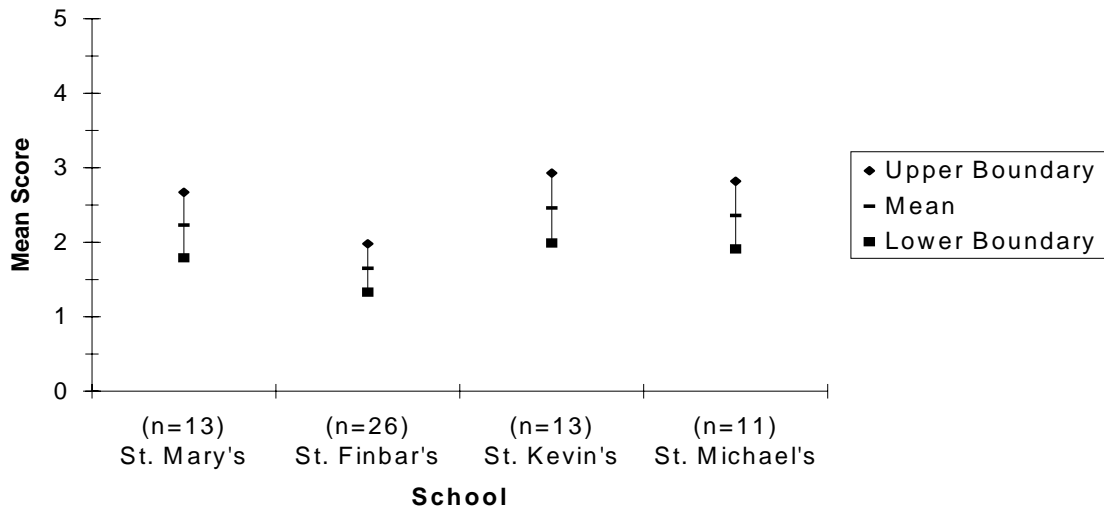
CSR is:	St Mary’s Teachers	St Mary’s Non Teachers	St Finbar’s Teachers	St Finbar’s Non Teachers	St Kevin’s Teachers	St Kevin’s Non Teachers	St Michael’s Teachers	St Michael’s Non Teachers
Credible	2.8	3.71	2.72	2.88	3.13	3.4	3.57	4.5

Five of the eight identified groups indicated that they believe the process to be credible. Again, the staff of St Finbar’s reflected the least positive view; with neither the teaching nor the non-teaching group averaging 3 (*to some degree*) or more. However, the average of 2.72 for teachers and 2.88 for non-teachers, representing a school average of 2.8, is almost *to some degree* and therefore, in light of their general responses to the survey questionnaire, can be considered as a positive response. The other group to average less than *to some degree* was the St Mary’s teachers.

The staff of St Michael’s was most supportive of the credibility of the process with the teachers averaging 3.57 and the non-teachers 4.5 (with 5 representing a belief that the process is *fully credible*). The other two schools were also supportive of the credibility of the process. The non-teachers at St Mary’s averaged 3.71, although the teaching staff averaged less than 3 (2.8). St Kevin’s teachers averaged 3.13 and the non-teachers 3.4.

Question 6a Please comment on the following with regard to the effect that the recent examination phase of the Catholic School Renewal process at your school had – stress levels.

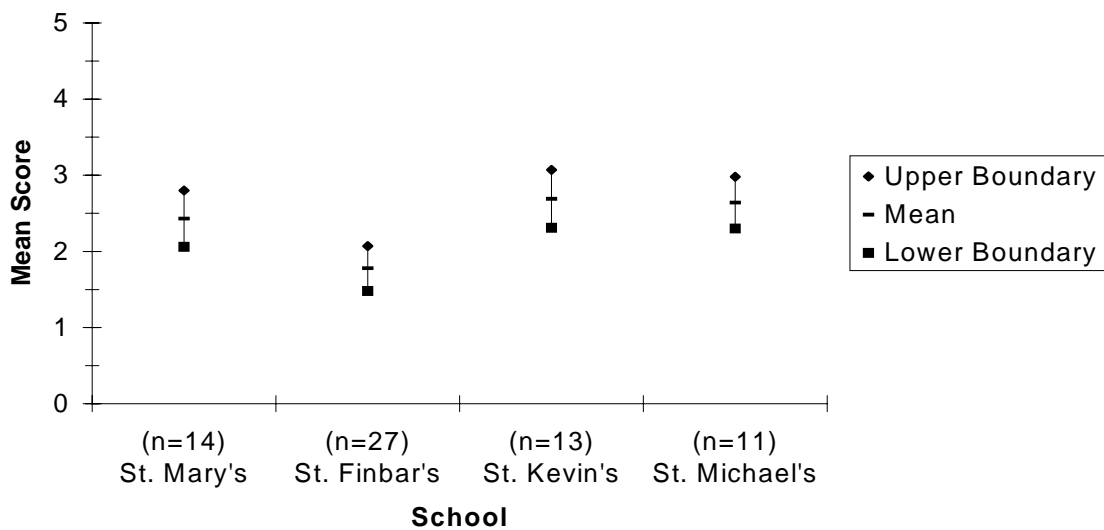
The responses to this question displayed statistically significant differences between schools ( $F_{(3,59)} = 4.503, p = .007$ ). Post hoc pairwise comparisons using the Scheffe procedure indicated that there were no significant pairwise differences.



**Figure 5.8 Means and 95% Confidence Intervals for Participants from Four Schools to Question 6a: “Stress levels”.**

Question 6b Please comment on the following with regard to the effect that the recent examination phase of the Catholic School Renewal process at your school had – time commitment.

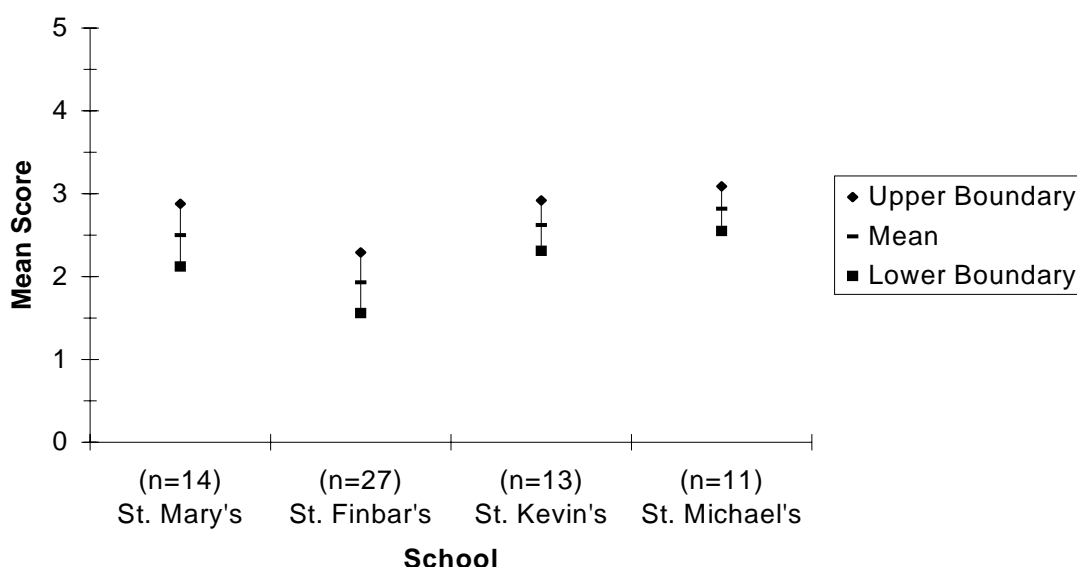
The responses to this question displayed statistically significant differences between schools ( $F_{(3,61)} = 7.902, p = <.0005$ ). Post hoc pairwise comparisons using the Scheffe procedure indicated that St Finbar’s ( $n = 27$ ) reported a significantly lower mean (1.78) than either St Kevin’s ( $n = 13$ ), which reported a mean of 2.69, or St Michael’s ( $n = 11$ ) which reported a mean of 2.64.



**Figure 5.9 Means and 95% Confidence Intervals for Participants from Four Schools to Question 6b: “Time commitment”.**

**Question 6c** Please comment on the following with regard to the effect that the recent examination phase of the Catholic School Renewal process at your school had – labour intensity.

The responses to this question displayed statistically significant differences between schools ( $F_{(3,61)} = 5.383, p = .002$ ). Post hoc pairwise comparisons using the Scheffe procedure indicated that the mean response of 1.93 from St Finbar’s ( $n = 27$ ) was lower than the mean of 2.82 reported from St Michael’s ( $n = 11$ ).



**Figure 5.10** Means and 95% Confidence Intervals for Participants from Four Schools to Question 6c: “Labour intensity”.

The responses to the questions which relate to implementing the examination phase of the process (Questions 6a, 6b and 6c) are less positive, with the majority of responses indicating that the stress levels, time commitment and labour intensity are all *too high*. Table 5.12 represents the mean scores for the questions relating to the practical elements of Research Question 3, “*Is the process of Catholic School Renewal a useful quality assurance tool?*”

**Table 5.12** Mean Scores for Survey Questionnaire Questions Relating to Research Question 3

Survey Questionnaire Questions relating to Research Question 1	Mean Score
Comment on stress levels during the examination phase	2.23
Comment on the time commitment during the examination phase	2.42
Comment on the labour intensity during the examination phase	2.43

Table 5.12 represents the responses to the 3 questions which relate to the practical elements of how useful CSR is as a quality assurance tool. This representation supports the mean scores represented in Table 5.12:

**Table 5.13 Mean Scores for Survey Questionnaire Questions Relating to the Practical Elements of Research Question 3 According to School and Role**

Comment on:	St Mary's Teachers	St Mary's Non Teachers	St Finbar's Teachers	St Finbar's Non Teachers	St Kevin's Teachers	St Kevin's Non Teachers	St Michael's Teachers	St Michael's Non Teachers
Stress	1.86	2.8	1.59	1.78	2.6	2.33	2.38	2.5
Time	2.11	3.0	1.83	1.78	2.57	2.75	2.78	2.67
Labour	2.22	3.0	1.83	2.11	2.67	2.0	2.86	2.75

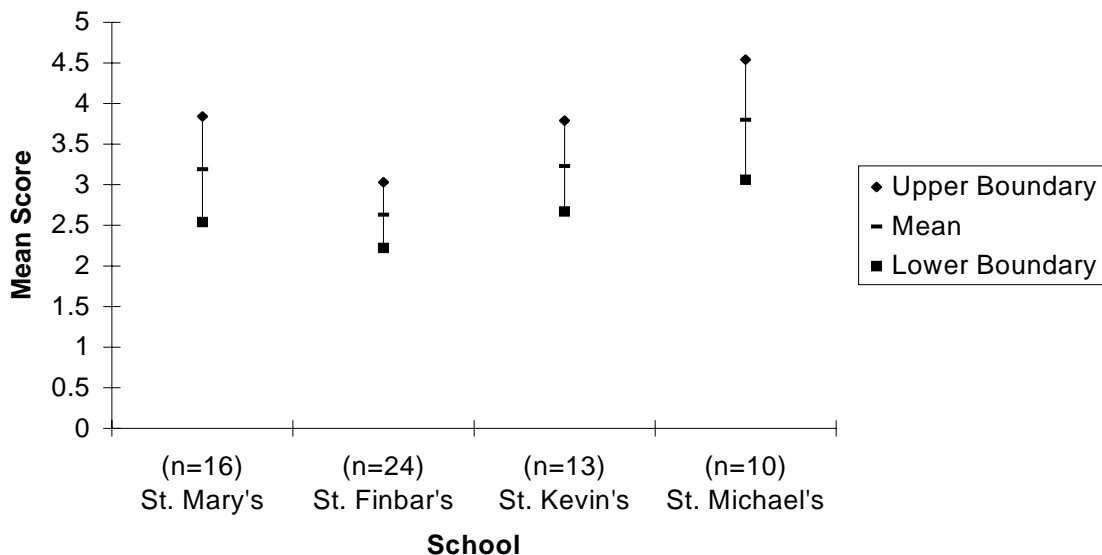
An analysis of the data presented in Table 5.13 reveals that none of the identified groups perceive the stress levels involved in the examination phase of the Catholic School Renewal process to be *acceptable*. Only the non-teachers from St Mary's perceive the time commitment as *acceptable*. Again, only the non-teachers from St Mary's indicate that the labour intensity involved is acceptable. An explanation of why the non-teachers at St Mary's have responded to these questions so differently to the other groups may be the fact that at this school the non-teaching staff were not involved in the preparation of the surveys, reports and associated activities, and therefore did not experience the levels of stress, time commitment and labour intensity that some members of the teaching staff may have encountered. Of the eight identified groups, none recorded an average of 3 (*acceptable*) or more for the three questions.

### 5.5.8 Survey Questionnaire Questions 3, 7 and 8

Questions 3, 7 and 8 are not specifically related to any of the three central research questions but, rather, inform the research generally.

**Question 3:** In your opinion how much ownership did the staff of your school have of the most recent Catholic School Renewal process?

The responses to this question displayed statistically significant differences between schools ( $F_{(3,59)} = 3.269, p = .027$ ). Post hoc pairwise comparisons using the Scheffe procedure indicated that the mean response from St Finbar's ( $n = 24$ ) which was 2.63 was lower than the mean of 3.8 reported from St Michael's ( $n = 10$ ).



**Figure 5.11 Means and 95% Confidence Intervals for Participants from Four Schools to Question 3: “Staff ownership of the process”**

The mean score for St Finbar’s was 2.63. St Finbar’s was the only school that recorded a score below *some ownership*. The following comments are indicative of the responses from St Finbar’s:

“something we had to do, not wanted to do – a sense of unity, but not ownership”  
 “Only the Internal Team (were involved)”

Conversely, the mean for St Michael’s was 3.8, with the following comments:

“The staff are concerned constantly with the operation and success of the school day to day. The process is enforced and the staff comply to meet the needs of the school and plan for future happiness and success in the schools daily life”  
 “Staff seemed to participate well in the process”  
 “I felt the staff saw the process as something imposed by DCEO. However, elements of the examination and school development planning were useful in that it allowed us to focus on what we wanted to work on”  
 “Mainly because we had to”

While the comments indicate a sense of imposition, it is evident from the results on the Likert scale that this was not accompanied by a sense of resentment.

Question 7: In your opinion, how long did the examination phase of the recent Catholic School Renewal process at your school last? Optional comment.

Of the sixty-eight participants, forty-eight gave a response to how long the process lasted. The responses ranged from two days to five years. According to Rockhampton Catholic



Education documentation (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1992, 1995a, 1995b, 1997, 2004), the examination phase is a year long phase of the CSR cycle, which in turn is a five year process. Table 5.14 represents the responses to Question 7:

**Table 5.14 Participants Perceptions of the Length of the Examination Phase**

School	Perceived length of Examination Phase (Mean in weeks)	Range
St Mary's	31 10*	2 days to 5 years
St Finbar's	19	3 days to 1 year
St Kevin's	20	1 week to 1 year
St Michael's	49	6 months to 18 months

\* Result when the 5 year response is removed

It is interesting that the school that has generally displayed the highest means throughout the research (St Michael's), is the school whose staff appears to have a better understanding of the process, at least to the degree of understanding the length of the examination phase of the process.

**Question 8:** Are there any other comments or suggestions that you would like to make?

Thirty-four of the participants chose to make a comment. The following table represents the number of participants who chose to comment per school as a percentage of the number of participants from the school:

**Table 5.15 Commenting Participants as a Percentage of all Participants**

School	All participants	No. who commented	Percentage
St Mary's	17	9	53%
St Finbar's	27	14	52%
St Kevin's	13	6	46%
St Michael's	11	5	45%
Total	68	34	50%

Some comments that will prove useful when discussing the results in Chapter 6 follow:

### **St Mary's**

- “Some statements made in the report were full of jargon which left staff confused and lost. I don't feel the external team had time to make true and accurate commendations/recommendations in the short time they were physically in the school. They seemed to rush through a report which was then looked upon as an official and 100% accurate document. This was then a dangerous situation as some

parents were only interested in negatives in this school community. It also reflected quite badly on the principal who in turn thought he was letting staff down and made him look as though he wasn't doing a good enough job".

- "Renewal puts a lot of extra stress on all staff, where this valuable time could be used in a more productive manner. As a parent I felt that my child could be disadvantaged educationally by the extra stress their teacher was enduring through the renewal process".
- "I do not believe this renewal process guarantees our students a quality Catholic education. It is not really a constructive process".
- "I believe that the idea of a renewal is good, but the external team having so much power is not right in my opinion".

### **St Finbar's**

- "The Board are not qualified in any way to lead the process of School Renewal. Board can provide support – not leadership".
- "I think that the report ends up as a book published for the External Team. It shouldn't be – it should be for our use. Most of the questions in the surveys were useless. We made the mistake of adapting another school's survey".
- "I doubt that this process has improved teaching/learning in any way in the school".
- "I found the renewal process to be rather ineffective. The stress and amount of work etc. that went on before the examination phase was ridiculous and as far as I can see there hasn't been a great benefit from it. Some of the suggestions were taken on board but nothing has really changed within the school. I think as teachers we are under enough pressure and have enough work to do without this extra burden".
- "Good idea in theory but was a total waste of time. Stressed everyone. Nothing has changed or improved".
- "As a non teaching staff member I felt I was not informed or involved in the renewal process. Many questions on the surveys were not relevant to my role in the school".

### **St Kevin's**

- "When I think of renewal, I basically think of the three day visit by the external team and the report that they present to the staff. I believe that this practice is not capable of giving a realistic and meaningful picture of a community and certainly isn't the best method for motivating a community to move forward with optimism".
- "I felt that the recommendations which I feel are largely the negatives, included a range of broad "education systems in general" issues. Therefore, upon reading the document and seeing all these 'negatives' it reflects a warped vision of the current situation especially in curriculum. I feel the principal needs to be the designated 'leader' due to admin time available".

### **St Michael's**

There were five comments made by the St Michael's participants. The following is representative of the comments, as well as being representative of the general response from St Michael's throughout the research project:

- “While not perfect the Renewal process is worthwhile and the best option I can think of. A bit like democracy – not perfect but the best we have”.

## 5.6 Summary of Analysis of Survey Questionnaire Data

Given that the case is comprised of four schools it was appropriate to analyse the school independent measures using ANOVA and F-tests. The F-test results were significant for all of the survey questionnaire questions except for Question 1, *It is claimed that Catholic School Renewal is an ongoing and continuous cycle over a four or five year period of time. To what extent has this been your experience?* Post hoc tests using the Scheffe procedure were applied to the other questions, with results being presented as they relate to the three central research questions:

1. How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a source of potential growth?
2. How does the process of Catholic School Renewal ensure quality Catholic education?
3. How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a useful quality assurance tool?

Following is a summary of the analysis of the school data where post hoc pairwise comparisons using the Scheffe procedure to indicate group differences are used. Table 5.16 presents a summary of the pairwise differences for Questions 2 to 10:

**Table 5.16 Statistically Significant<sup>1</sup> Pairwise Differences of Responses from Schools**

Question	Lowest School	Highest School
2. Q.2. Assures parents of quality	St Finbar's	St Michael's
3. Q.3 Staff ownership of the process	St Finbar's	St Michael's
4. Q.4a Source of spiritual growth	St Finbar's	St Michael's
5. Q.4b Source of personal growth	No pairwise differences	
6. Q.4c Source of professional growth	St Finbar's & St Kevin's	St Michael's
7. Q.5 A credible process	St Finbar's	St Michael's
8. Q.6a Stress levels at the school	No pairwise differences	
9. Q.6b Time commitment at the school	St Finbar's	St Kevin's & St Michael's
10. Q.6c Labour intensity at the school	St Finbar's	St Michael's

There were no pairwise differences for Questions 4b and 6a. However the F-tests were ( $F_{(3,63)} = 2.808, p = .047$ ) and ( $F_{(3,59)} = 4.503, p = .007$ ) respectively.

<sup>1</sup> Statistically different at the alpha level adopted for this study (.05) using the Scheffe post-hoc procedure

### **5.6.1 Research Question 1: How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a source of growth?**

The responses to each of the three survey questionnaire questions (4a, 4b and 4c) related to Research Question 1, displayed statistically significant differences between schools:

$$4a \quad F_{(3,64)} = 5.154, p = .003$$

$$4b \quad F_{(3,63)} = 2.808, p = .047$$

$$4c \quad F_{(3,62)} = 5.812, p = .001$$

St Michael's recorded the highest mean for all three questions (2.73, 3.00 and 3.70 respectively), with St Finbar's having the lowest for Questions 4a (1.44) and 4b (1.96) and the second lowest for Question 4c (2.27), with St Kevin's recording the lowest (2.15).

Only thirty-one percent of participants believe that CSR is a source of spiritual growth; thirty-seven percent that it is a source of personal growth; and fifty-three percent that it is a source of professional growth. From the responses to the three questions, the only scores that represented *effective* or better were in relation to *professional growth*. These responses were from the teachers (4.18) and non-teaching staff (3.25) at St Michael's.

### **5.6.2 Research Question 2: How does the process of Catholic School Renewal ensure quality Catholic education?**

The post hoc comparisons using Scheffe procedures for survey questionnaire question 2, the question associated with research question 2, reported that the mean response from St Finbar's was 2.30, while the mean response from St Michael's was 3.45. Sixty-nine percent of participants believe that the process of CSR does assure parents that their children have access to quality Catholic education.

The mean scores range from 2.11 from non-teaching staff at St Finbar's to 4.21 from non-teaching staff at St Kevin's. The responses to this question recorded a high standard deviation of 1.14. Of the schools, only St Finbar's recorded an average of less than 3 *to some degree*.

### **5.6.3 Research Question 3: How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a useful quality assurance tool?**

Survey questionnaire question 5, *To what extent do you believe the process to be credible*, was responded to in the affirmative by sixty-six percent of participants, which was reflected in the mean score of 3.12, with 3 representing *to some degree*. Post hoc pairwise comparisons using the Scheffe procedure indicated that the mean response from St Finbar's was 2.77, lower than 3.91 reported from St Michael's.

Questions 6a, 6b and 6c were associated with the practicalities of the process. These questions were used to gather data associated with stress levels, time commitment and labour intensity. While post hoc pairwise comparisons using the Scheffe procedure for Question 6a (stress levels) indicated no significant pairwise differences, St Finbar's recorded the lowest mean (1.69) and St Kevin's the highest (2.47), closely followed by St Michael's (2.44). The responses to Questions 6a and 6b, when subjected to post hoc pairwise comparisons using the Scheffe procedure, both indicated that St Finbar's reported a significantly lower mean (1.78 for Question 6b and 1.93 for Question 6C) than St Kevin's and St Michael's (2.69 and 2.64 respectively) for Question 6b and St Michael's (2.82) for Question 6c.

None of the eight identified groups recorded a mean of 3 or more for the question relating to stress (6a). The non-teachers from St Mary's were the only group to record a 3 for each of the other two questions relating to time commitment (6b) and labour intensity (6c). The researcher believes that the non-teachers at St Mary's responded as they did because they were not involved in any of the labour intensive activities associated with CSR, nor those which require an additional time commitment.

### **5.6.4 Conclusion**

An analysis of the data gathered using the context-specific pen and paper survey indicates the following from the personal perspectives of those staff members who were involved as participants:

- The process is generally not regarded as a "source of growth"
- The process does assure parents that their children are receiving quality Catholic education
- As a quality assurance tool the process has credibility but is too stressful, time consuming and labour intensive.

## **5.7 Summary**

Chapter 5 first presented an analysis of the data gathered from the interviews. These data were used to inform the structure and content of the survey questionnaire. Secondly, an analysis of the data gathered from the survey questionnaire was presented. The data were reduced and analysed and will be used in the next chapter as a means of exploring the three research questions:

1. How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a source of growth?
2. How does the process of Catholic School Renewal ensure quality Catholic education?
3. How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a useful quality assurance tool?

This chapter has reviewed the major findings of the analysis of the interviews and the survey questionnaire data. These issues will be discussed in Chapter Six.

## **Chapter Six**

### **Discussion of Findings**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

This thesis explores Catholic School Renewal in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton. This issue has been specifically explored from the personal perspectives of some staff members from a selection of primary school communities that undertook the examination phase of the Catholic School Renewal process.

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the findings presented in Chapter 5.

The conduct of this research has been focused by the following research questions:

1. How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a source of potential growth?
2. How does the process of Catholic School Renewal ensure quality Catholic education?
3. How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a useful quality assurance tool?

These three questions will provide the structure through which the major findings of the thesis will be discussed.

#### **6.2 How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a source of potential growth?**

In order to discuss adequately the findings, a brief recapitulation of issues presented in the literature is appropriate. “Potential growth” is a term commonly used in Rockhampton Catholic Education documentation in its educational framework in general and in its model of renewal in particular (see, for example, Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1992, 1995a, 1995b, 1997, 2004).

Change and self-renewal are natural phenomena and it is natural that organisations such as schools, as living systems, will constantly change and self-renew. A natural consequence of this self-renewal is growth. Nothing lives independently since life, both human and animal, organises itself within systems of interdependency and connectedness (Sungaila, 1995; Wheatley, 1997, 1999).

The schools in the living system that constitutes Rockhampton Catholic Education can be considered to be a loosely coupled system, in that they are connected in an education enterprise through the honouring of a set of articulated Christian values encapsulated in shared vision. To achieve authentic change - change which is owned and embraced by the organisation's members - there must first be a transformation of personal meaning within the constituency which then leads to and results in a change of the organisational or shared vision. That is, the prerequisite for authentic change has to be the nurturance of new personal meanings which in themselves become the triggers to create shared personal vision and new evolving corporate directions. This is a most important axiom to consider in exploring the changes identified in this research. Top down change fails to generate constituency ownership; it is ineffective as a catalyst to change the primary dynamic essential for organisational growth - a change in personal meaning and vision (Wheatley, 1999).

It is essential that those involved in change practices understand that living systems, such as schools, are free to choose whether they will change or not. While it is not impossible to coerce a living system to change, this change cannot be authentic unless the system recognises meaningfulness. Change must be encouraged, not feared, if a true sense of meaningfulness is to be achieved.

Schools must continue to develop processes and techniques to facilitate effective renewal in order to nurture and evaluate the quality of school education (Snowdon & Gorton, 1998). However, the current nature of school education is so complex and multi-faceted that contributions from the wider community must be garnered and critiqued (Hargreaves, 2004). This is because the fundamental purpose of any planned change in a Catholic context, including CSR, must be to enable the school to accomplish its educational goals more effectively and efficiently as a means of not only benefiting students as persons (Carter, 1998; Fullan, 2005), but as "persons in a community" (McLaughlin, 1999, p. 12), a uniquely Catholic anthropological perspective in the achieving of the Church's education mission of promoting the Kingdom of God (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977; Laghi, 1996; McLaughlin, 1998; 1999).

In the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton, growth refers to planned change, in particular that brought about as a result of a re-evaluation of a school's structures and processes; the CSR process. This perspective carries within it an inherent deficiency. In a living system, not all



changes are planned. Indeed, in some contexts order can only emerge out of necessary chaos (Wheatley, 1992). The primary purpose of school improvement efforts can be expressed as the effect that the improvement will have on the students and teachers at the classroom level. The emphasis is on enhancing the school's capacity for change and implementing specific reforms (Hopkins et al., 1994) which will enhance pupil progress, achievement and development (Carter, 1998) or, to use the language of Rockhampton Catholic Education, "grow" (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1992, 1995a, 1995b, 1997, 2004).

School improvement is about school communities taking control of their future by inviting others to work with them in an attempt to improve or develop the particular school community and, in so doing, enhancing student outcomes as well as strengthening the school's capacity for change and growth (Fullan, 2005; Gronn, 2000; Hopkins et al., 1994). Change is reflected in the alteration of basic issues of schooling such as values, beliefs, structures, working arrangements and distribution of power. The six forces that impact on change as identified by Sergiovanni & Starratt (1998), namely, bureaucratic forces, personal forces, market forces, professional forces, cultural forces and democratic forces are encompassed in the renewal policy (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1997, 2004).

The initial analysis of the data in this case study emphatically demonstrated that the CSR process as a source of potential growth generated major conflicting and contrasting outcomes in different schools. The findings at two schools, St Michael's and St Kevin's, indicated that the staff in general believed the CSR process to be positive, while the staffs at St Mary's and St Finbar's were energetically critical of the process. A number of themes emerged, the most dominant of which were:

1. The process;
2. The composition of the EVT and the role of the supervisor; and
3. The role of the principal.

These themes provided the lenses through which this study's data concerning the topic of the CSR process as a source of potential growth were discussed, and which explained to some degree the dynamics identified within the results.

### **6.2.1 The Process**

In the presentation and analysis of data in Chapter 5, it became evident that, from the perspectives of the staff members interviewed, there was a significant range of opinions about the quality of CSR as an instigating force in achieving change. Of note was the process used in the examination phase and the composition of the EVT.

The literature identifies that, prior to selecting a change process, it is important that the school decision makers have a clear understanding of the culture, vision and existing conditions for change within the school. Donahue (1997) argues that without a clear understanding and articulation of these characteristics of the school, a viable change process cannot be formulated or implemented and change will not occur.

The ultimate aim of any process of change is to enable the school to accomplish its goals more effectively and efficiently as a means of benefiting all of the students who attend the school (Carter, 1998; Cimbricz, 2002; Fullan, 2005; Patching, 1999). The change should therefore alter “basic issues of schooling such as goals, beliefs, working arrangements and distribution of power and authority” (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1998, p. 7).

In his work on school restructuring, Donahue (1997) argues five conclusions. The first is that schools rely on their principal too much. The other conclusions are that:

- the school restructuring process should be undertaken as a formal reorganisation of the school;
- formalising the process would lessen the school’s vulnerability to changes in leadership and staff;
- every member of the school community should have an active role; and
- schools need an external change agent.

The literature also identifies that the most important factor in the change process is people and that resistance from some of the people is normal and can even be beneficial if the voices and opinions of the resisters are heard and acknowledged (Snowdon & Gorton, 1998; Wagner, 2001). The progressive practices inherent in school restructuring require significant skill, complex learning and persistence and it is always easier to revert to earlier-learned behaviours (Heifetz, 2004; Perkins, 2003). A successful change process will lead to genuine educational change which will involve a transformation of the individuals involved (Bennett et al., 1992; James, 1996; Starratt, 2004). The change agent leading the process must ensure that the changes will continue to serve the needs of the students and be mindful of the values

of justice and participatory democracy (James, 1996); will take into account the fact that change involves feelings and emotions (Hede, 2003); and avoid feelings of alienation (Oliver, 1996). Real change “represents a serious personal and collective experience characterised by ambivalence and uncertainty” (Fullan, 1991, p. 32) for those involved.

Chief Executive Officers of corporations “have reported that up to 75% of their major change initiatives have failed to create the results promised” (Wheatley, 1999, p. 1). This is because organisations have been viewed in mechanistic terms as collections of replaceable parts capable of being reengineered (Wheatley, 1997). The organisations have been cluttered with control mechanisms that paralyse both employees and employers. Authentic and self-sustaining educational change depends on the commitment, enthusiasm and motivation of those involved in the process (Fullan, 2005; Gronn, 2000). If change is to be effective, it should be continuous with participation by all stakeholders, manifest in a collaborative approach which will contribute to the growth of the school.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, as a response to this perceived lack of success of change initiatives, organisations, in recent times, have been viewed through the lens of living systems (Wheatley, 1999). From such a perspective, the research has concluded that self-managed teams are far more productive than any other form of organising (Starratt, 2001). People organise together to accomplish more, not less. Furthermore, living systems are naturally occurring and form through collaboration as they recognise shared interests (Wheatley, 1999).

The concept of *out of chaos comes order* (Wheatley, 1992) recognises that problems, or disequilibrium, are a necessary part of the evolutionary process, and not a hindrance that should be avoided or disposed of. Organisations have traditionally feared chaos, since it has been perceived as a loss of control. However, chaos theory asserts that it is not possible to reach feelings of peace and greater creativity without surrendering to chaos and accepting it as a part of the process by which life creates new levels of order and understanding. “Organisations are in continuous evolutions. Once a change takes place, the system is never the same again” (Sullivan, 1999, p. 412).

This brief theoretical review is important as a prelude to a discussion of the findings.

### **6.2.1.1 The Process of Catholic School Renewal in the Rockhampton Diocese**

In the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton, policies are written in a format which first states the policy and then lists consequences, the latter constituting the guidelines for implementation of the policy statement. The purpose of the CSR process in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton is clearly articulated in the document *Consequences for Policy - Quality Assurance of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Rockhampton* (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 2004) (Appendix 4):

As part of ensuring the quality of Catholic education, each diocesan school will engage in a process of continuous School Renewal to ensure students have access to a quality education which is Catholic in nature and purpose. A school development plan to guide future growth and life is a significant feature of the Catholic School Renewal.

The data in this study point to a number of flaws in the implementation of some of the consequences of Renewal as they are spelt out in the document *Consequences for Policy - Quality Assurance of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Rockhampton* (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 2004). Of particular note here, as it relates to the process of renewal, is Consequence 2.

### **6.2.1.2 Ownership of the Process**

Consequence 2 states that “the School Renewal program is owned by the school community - students, staff, parents, priest, parish and the wider community” (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 2004). There are a number of factors across all schools, as well as some that are specific to individual schools, which make it difficult for this consequence to come to fruition. The fact that a diocesan policy dictates the process has tended to negate or, at the very best, stifle a sense of ownership of the process. At none of the schools was there a sense of ownership by students, a significant number of parents, the parish priest or the wider community.

The process of policy generation in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton commences when someone identifies a need to formulate a new policy or to review an existing policy. Invariably, this identification comes from a member of the Diocesan Executive Leadership Team (DELT). The policy is drafted by the policy officer (a member of the DELT) and presented to the Diocesan Education Council (DEC). When approved in principle, it is circulated to schools, school boards and Parents and Friends Associations for comment.

Rarely do these groups make comment. The policy then goes through a number of drafts and is eventually ratified by the DEC and forwarded to schools for implementation.

The members of the DEC and the policy officer at Catholic Education have some ownership of the newly approved policy; rarely do any members of school communities have any ownership whatsoever. The reality of the process is that policy is generated by a distant body and passed on to schools. Members of the school communities make no real contribution to the development of the policy and therefore do not feel any ownership of the process.

Further evidence of lack of ownership is the fact that the involvement of students at all of the schools consisted of the children being handed a survey and instructed to complete it and hand it back to the teacher. The student leaders and some Year 7 students were interviewed. At none of the schools were students involved in the formulation of the surveys or in interviewing people. However, suggesting that students will have ownership is not a practical expectation as students have no skills in formulating survey questionnaires or in conducting interviews. Therefore Consequence 2, “the School Renewal program is owned by the school community - students, staff, parents, priest, parish and the wider community” (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 2004) is unrealistic, impractical and out of touch with reality.

A small number of parents were involved in the internal review at two of the schools. A percentage of parents were selected for interview at all schools and all parents were given the opportunity to complete a survey questionnaire at all schools; an average of thirty percent of parents did so. The result of this was that at none of the schools did parents as a group feel that they had ownership of the process.

To suggest that any of the parish priests involved had ownership of the process at their respective schools is nonsense, as would be the case at any of the schools in the diocese. Priests are no longer involved with parish schools at a grass roots level. The reality is that many of the schools do not have a resident parish priest and those that do have one rarely see him at the school.

Another group that is often referred to in school policies is the “wider community” - an overused term that is so broad as to make it virtually meaningless. None of the four schools involved in the research sought or received any feedback from the “wider community”. The literature, however, shows the importance and necessity of including the wider community as a contributor to school policies. The needs of the clients of the school - students, families and the wider community - are changing, and the school needs to adjust to meet these needs (Bradley, 1993). Schools must embrace the world beyond their gates and work with the wider community to bring about positive change (Hargreaves, 1994). This has become an imperative for contemporary schools as:

1. schools cannot shut their gates and leave the outside world on the doorstep;
2. schools are losing their monopoly on learning;
3. schools are one of our last hopes for rescuing and reinventing community;
4. teachers need a lot more help;
5. market competition, parental choice and individual self-management are already redefining how schools relate to their wider environments; and
6. schools can no longer be indifferent to the working lives that await their students when they move into the adult world (Hargreaves (1997, p. 4).

The case for planned educational change, which has been established because schools, as living systems, go through cyclical processes of growth and decline at all levels - organic, psychological and physical (Oliver, 1996; Sungaila, 1995; Wheatley, 1992, 1999) - is further strengthened because of a need for schools to be accountable, informed and in touch with the community (Hargreaves, 1994, 1997; O’Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998; Snowdon & Gorton, 1998).

### **6.2.1.3 Case Study Feedback on the Process of Catholic School Renewal**

As previously stated, the findings at two schools, St Michael’s and St Kevin’s, indicated that generally the staff believed the CSR process to be positive, while the staffs at St Mary’s and St Finbar’s were extremely critical of the process.

Comments that typify the response of staff at St Michael’s and St Kevin’s are:

Everyone came out of this one [examination phase] feeling happy with it all. Must have said more positive things. There were no major positive findings last year at [another school]. It is no longer a horrific experience as it used to be ... People were really happy about it (Mary).

Having experienced three school renewals, the most recent process was by far the most effective, fair and rewarding. It is now fine tuned enough to give a clear picture

of the performance of all personnel at the appropriate school instead of just a “good show” for a short time (Joanne).

I found it very rewarding this time as opposed to ones in the past. I think it’s great for everyone to feel that we are open to everyone and accountable (Irene).

Conversely, typical comments from staff at St Mary’s and St Finbar’s include:

As far as the whole process went, it’s actually a source of death and I think that school communities do well to spin it so that it actually turns into growth. If you took it as it stands, you could kill teachers’ willingness to get in and have a go – they could say “I’m doing this, I’m trying my guts out and look at this, look what we get” (Quentin).

No, it was not a life giving experience. It has not really proved to be a source of growth (Tara).

I don’t believe it was a source of growth for the school. It put pressure on the staff. We have so much to get on with without the trivial (Ursula).

One theme that emerged from the responses was the impact of CSR on the daily work of staff and students.

#### **6.2.1.3.1 Teacher Leadership**

Of major concern to staff members was the amount of stress that they felt during the process. Two related factors were that it was time consuming and that it was very labour intensive. All schools overwhelmingly reported stress as a major factor in the process. This in turn led to the common response that the process was not a source of growth as it “put pressure on staff” and did not present a true indication of life at the school.

Staff at St Michael’s and St Kevin’s identified two major reasons for stress.

1. Those who had been involved as members of the Internal Review Committee (IRC) had undertaken all of the data gathering which involved formulating, word-processing, distributing and collecting the survey questionnaires, prior to collating and interpreting the data. The final stage was the compilation of the Internal Report which was a substantial document. Until this task was completed, the IRC members felt under stress.
  - i. The only negative that I noticed was the stress that everyone, staff generally, was under during the week or two beforehand (Bertha).

- ii. The stress came in when we were getting it [the Internal Report] typed up (Ophelia).
  - iii. Probably the only negative that I noticed was the stress that everyone, staff generally, was under (Katie).
2. The other reason for stress was classroom visits. The experience and the anticipation of the experience, of having a visitor in the classroom, asking questions and “checking up” proved to be a source of great stress for some teachers. Teachers expressed resentment about having to endure classroom visits and questioned the purpose and value of the visits.

Participants acknowledged that although it made them feel uncomfortable, stress was not always a negative phenomenon as it is often needed in order for the status quo to be challenged. There was an acceptance by these participants that until people are placed under pressure or stress, they will often not be open to, and therefore able to change, and that people grow professionally by negotiating the tension between the stresses that they find themselves under and the support provided by others.

While acknowledging the possibly negative aspect of stress, the overwhelming belief of participants from St Kevin’s and St Michael’s was that the CSR process is helpful because of:

- the professional abilities of the EVT members;
- the sensitivity employed by the EVT;
- the well honed skills of the EVT;
- the credibility that the process was afforded because of the approach of the EVT;
- the perceived authenticity and credibility of the EVT members;
- the management of the internal process by the Chair of the IRC;
- the purpose of the process having been well communicated prior to the examination phase;
- the leadership provided by the Regional Supervisor of Schools; and
- the meaningfulness of the process as an authentic expression of professional development.



However, the staff members at St Mary's and St Finbar's were frustrated at not having been given enough information and direction about the process. The process was to be run by staff members, but they believed that the information they received was "shoddy", that it had not been clearly articulated to them and therefore they did not see either the purpose or the end result as being important.

There was also substantial criticism of the level of stress involved for staff members who shared the same stressors as their colleagues at St Michael's and St Kevin's, namely, the workload and stress involved in the lead up to the EVT visit, and the classroom visits and work program checking, carried out by the EVT.

At these two schools, the participants were generally less philosophical than their colleagues at the other schools about the need for stress, feeling that it was another fault of the process as exercised in the northern region. In complete contrast to the conclusions reached at St Michael's and St Kevin's, there was an overwhelming belief that the CSR process is not helpful or life giving because of:

- the absence of professional abilities of the EVT members;
- the unprofessional approach of the EVT;
- the composition of the EVT being seen as inappropriate;
- the lack of credibility that the process was afforded because of the approach of the EVT and the Regional Supervisor of Schools;
- the purpose of the process having not been well communicated to the school communities by the Regional Supervisor of Schools prior to the examination phase;
- the lack of leadership provided by the Regional Supervisor of Schools;
- the lack of skills employed by the EVT;
- the lack of team-ness and cohesion of the EVT;
- the lack of credibility and respect afforded to the Regional Supervisor of Schools;  
and
- the absence of meaningful relationships between school and Regional Supervisor of Schools and EVT.

A major flaw in the process at St Mary's and St Finbar's was that the staff members were not provided with the necessary professional development to enable them to implement change (Elmore & Burney, 1999; McGaw, 1997; Quinn, 2000). Another consequence of the lack of professional development was that they did not gain any personal meaning from the process (Wheatley, 1999) and were therefore not committed to it.

Because the Regional Supervisor of Schools and EVT members appeared to lack cognitive understanding and knowledge, this had a considerable effect on the negative view that participants had of the process (Fullan, 2005; Marsh, 2000; Massell & Goertz, 1999; Price et al., 1995; Spillane, 1997, 1998). This, combined with the stress placed on staff members, had a huge impact on the level of support or lack of support given to the process (Marsh, 2000).

The Regional Supervisor of Schools is one of the key players in assuring purposeful interaction between and among individuals within and across the 'tri-levels' of school, district and system (Fullan, 2003). The lack of leadership displayed by the Regional Supervisor of Schools (Northern) played a significant role in the lack of sustainability of the process (Fullan, 2005).

Another sub theme that emerged from the data was the concept of student learning.

#### **6.2.1.3.2 Student Learning**

None of those interviewed at St Finbar's was able to comment that the process had improved outcomes for students. In fact, the three teaching staff members stated that it had not improved outcomes; the principal was more tentative, but stated that "I have no hard evidence that outcomes have improved" (Dominic).

The literature clearly states that student achievement is nurtured through the involvement of the principal with teachers in a shared leadership approach. Nowhere in the CSR process is this concept explored. With the many forms of leadership in schools becoming more complex and the relationships between teachers and principals becoming more significant, it would seem pertinent to recognise teachers as leaders and to explore this area accordingly. Furthermore, teacher leadership is recognised as being catalytic in promoting self sustaining

change (Crowther & Olsen, 1997; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001) and student achievement which adds further weight to the benefits of exploring teacher leadership as it impacts on student learning as part of the process.

Crowther et al. (2002) assert that the *IDEAS* process has the potential to impact positively on student learning as it is a process which enhances learning outcomes by valuing the work of teachers and their classrooms (Andrews, 2002) and is underpinned by concepts including (a) teacher leadership and parallel leadership; and (b) school-wide pedagogy (Crowther et al., 2002) while recognising that teachers are the key to student success (Andrews, 2002).

The second theme to emerge was the composition of the EVT and the role of the supervisor.

### **6.6.2 The Composition of the EVT and the Role of the Regional Supervisor of Schools**

The EVT, comprising, by definition, members external to the immediate school community, is a salient feature of the model of CSR. As outlined below, there is a diverse range of opinions about both the effectiveness and the composition of the EVT. Empowerment of the ultimate change agents - the school leaders and teachers - is essential to the success of the CSR process in bringing about change. It is argued that ideally the people involved in the school improvement process are the people who are most closely associated with the school (Crowther & Olsen, 1997; Fullan, 2005; Gronn, 2000; Harris, 2002; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). This group of people includes teachers, senior leaders, governors and parents. The literature suggests that the approach of such people will be substantially different to that of office-based bureaucrats.

A distinction must be made between the role of the EVT and that of the school leaders and staff in the CSR process. CSR is a cyclical process, spanning across five years. (The fact that this is not understood by many of those involved in the process - as was outlined in Chapter 5 is, in itself, another point for discussion.) The EVT is involved in the examination phase of renewal and has as its brief the validation of survey data already gathered from within the school and from the parent and community body. The findings of the EVT are then to be acted upon by those responsible within the school, usually the school leaders in the first instance. The role of the school leaders cannot be underestimated. Much of the literature on the effectiveness of organisations attributes significance to the role of

leadership; there is an important correlation between the effectiveness of the performance of a leader and the outcomes of an organisation. Merely having a process does not guarantee a successful outcome as there needs to be effective leadership in order to implement the change (McCorley, 1999b).

The literature provides differing views as to the role of the System Office in the change process. In recent years, state and federal policies in the United States have increasingly rendered local districts as irrelevant in the process of educational change (Elmore, 1997; Elmore & Burney, 1999; Massell & Goertz, 1999; Spillane, 1996). Some critics of school districts claim that they have no role to play and that they are simply inefficient bureaucratic institutions (Chubb & Moe, 1990; Elmore 1993, citing Finn, 1991) which are unresponsive to public, teacher and student needs (Marsh, 2000). Others regard them as necessary only as institutions through which policies and funding must pass (Marsh, 2000).

Despite this trend in policy, an increasing number of studies in recent years have documented that districts do play a key role and are important agents of change (Chrispeels, 1997; Kirp & Cyrus, 1995; Massell & Goertz, 1999; Spillane, 1996). Marsh (2001) lists the following factors which have emerged from the literature as being important in determining how districts deal with implementing policy and change:

- capacity;
- size;
- understanding;
- leadership;
- organisation and governance;
- political culture and reform history; and
- nature of the policy

Change is more likely to happen in larger districts as they have the resources to facilitate change (Firestone & Fuhrman, 1998; Fullan, 2005) and they also have the outside connections to access sources of information and technical assistance (Hannaway & Kimball, 1997).

There is some evidence that the beliefs, skills, and energy of people in specific positions make a difference (Firestone & Fuhrman, 1998), and that strong leadership from school

supervisors facilitates a change initiative (Fullan, 2005), whereas there was less support for the initiative from districts where the supervisors were less involved. It was also found that there was a greater chance of initiatives being adopted if the supervisor had a passion for the initiative prior to it being elevated to reform status.

The cognitive understanding and knowledge that Regional Supervisors of Schools have of reform efforts has a considerable effect on how well or otherwise reforms are implemented and resourced in a district (Fullan, 2003, 2005; Marsh, 2000; Massell & Goertz, 1999; Price et al., 1995; Spillane, 1997, 1998). This, combined with the administrator's ability to balance central authority and school authority, has a huge impact on the level of support or lack of support given to reform ideas and policies (Marsh, 2000). Sustained reform is less likely to occur in the absence of a leader who has a clear understanding of the direction in which the school should be heading and who can steer and facilitate the change process (Fullan, 2005).

The provision of professional development is necessary for the implementation of successful change (Elmore & Burney, 1999; McGaw, 1997; Quinn, 2000). Local context and personal beliefs also impact on people's perceptions as do strong leadership and energy from district personnel (Firestone & Fuhrman, 1998; Fullan, 2005). These are major factors in the successful implementation of change.

#### **6.2.2.1 Case Study Feedback on the Composition of the EVT and the Role of the Regional Supervisor of Schools**

Participants who expressed positive opinions about the examination phase of CSR believed that the fundamental reason for their conclusion was the positive professional abilities and sensitive approach of the EVT. The EVT members were well prepared for the task with which they were charged with undertaking, they employed a professional approach and were well skilled in the necessary interview and observation techniques.

Everyone came out of this one feeling happy with it all. Must have said more positive things. There were no major positive findings last year at [another school]. It is no longer a horrific experience as it used to be ... People were really happy about it (Mary).

Having experienced three school renewals, the most recent process was by far the most effective, fair and rewarding. It is now fine tuned enough to give a clear picture of the performance of all personnel at the appropriate school instead of just a "good show" for a short time (Joanne).

I found it very rewarding this time as opposed to ones in the past. I think it's great for everyone to feel that we are open to everyone and accountable (Irene).

There are a number of reasons which caused staff members to respond positively to the EVT. Firstly, all EVT members were acknowledged as experienced "successful" educators who invited guidance and input from their peers. This enhanced both their credibility among teachers as appropriate persons to undertake the process and their likeableness among the teachers. In general, people co-operate with those whom they like.

At both St Michael's and St Kevin's the EVT was comprised of three supervisors and an experienced principal. On each EVT, two of the supervisors had been involved as team members on many successful CSRs and were well qualified for the task. The other supervisor and the principal were willing to be guided by those with more experience. All were professional educators with long standing records as capable operators who were consequently afforded credibility by the school community members.

We got what we asked for in terms of people on the team. I like that we get a choice in this. We wanted the principal element to be someone who could advise us on the future of our school. Ours is a growing school – we wanted someone with experience in this area. The option to choose one or two people on it is good (Harry).

The strength of the process was that the external team was friendly, capable and credible (Betty).

Clearly, it is essential that the EVT members are seen as credible by the school community. This is supported in the literature which demonstrates that, above all else, people need to be able to believe in their leaders. Leaders must be trustworthy, dynamic and experts in their field. The 'First Law of Leadership' - "if we don't believe in the messenger, we won't believe the message" (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 26) - is a principle that must be acknowledged by the EVT members. Those who perceive their leaders to be credible will:

- be proud to tell others they're part of the organisation;
- feel a strong sense of team spirit;
- see their own personal values as consistent with those of the organisation;
- feel attached and committed to the organisation; and
- have a sense of ownership of the process.

as opposed to:

- producing only if they are being watched carefully;
- being motivated primarily by money;
- saying good things about the organisation publicly but criticising it privately;

- considering looking for another job if the organisation experiences problems; and
- feeling unsupported and unappreciated (Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

A second and pivotal reason for the success of the CSR process was that EVT members were prepared to act as a team and not merely as a cluster of individuals. They deliberately planned a collegial approach to the process accordingly. The EVT members had reviewed the Internal Report prior to the school visit, discussed this as a team and had generated shared understandings of many of the issues of concern expressed in the school report to be explicitly explored in the visit. Each was sensitive to the needs and concerns of those at the school and made a concerted and conscious effort to put the school based people at ease even before setting foot in the school. As a team, the EVT members had a shared understanding of the process as a life giving process which was positive and aimed to provide the school community with collegial support by providing some suggestions for the future growth and direction of the school.

The concept and importance of shared leadership is well documented in the literature. Successful models of leadership commonly entail shared leadership, collaborative leadership or multiple leadership roles, with the individuals undertaking facilitative behaviour towards a common goal (Limerick et al., 1998). Leadership should be distributed, rather than being the task of a sole designated leader (Cheng, 1996; Crowther et al., 2001; Limerick et al., 1998; Fullan, 2005; Ogawa & Bossert, 1995; Sultmann & McLaughlin, 2000). It is an organic activity, dependent on interrelationships and connections (Riley et al., 2001).

Moreover, the night before the visit commenced the EVT shared a meal with the IRC to hear their concerns and expectations for the visit. This further informed the EVT as well as achieving the goal of putting the IRC members at ease by communicating to them the positive nature of the process.

The panel was definitely okay and put me at ease ... I was very much at ease with all of the people on the panel (Irene).

[The External Team member] was wonderful and put me at ease (Pamela).

The External Team was unobtrusive, friendly and easy to get on with and as a result I found it very rewarding and was very much at ease with all of the people on the panel (Lorraine).

The External Team was really good. They were trying to put us at ease (Bertha).

A third reason for the positive experience was that the EVT members were skilled in the necessary areas of empathetic interviewing along with a supportive style of class-room observation and visitation. EVT members were charged with the task of interviewing school community members in pairs, with due consideration being given to the composition of the pair in relation to the issues that might arise in the interview. Class visits were also coordinated being mindful of the areas of expertise and interest of the particular EVT members. Staff members who were experts in IT were engaged collegially by EVT members who shared the same expertise. Clearly, this approach enhanced the credibility and legitimacy of the process for all participants because the process was experienced by the staff as essentially one of professional development aligned with the enhancement of student learning. As the focus of any school improvement effort, of which CSR is one, is the enhancement of student learning, this approach proved to be very meaningful.

I found that the process was not intimidating at all. It was easy because of the skills of the people on the external team, because they had good people skills. It was a good process and was handled well ... I felt as though I had ownership of the process and was not intimidated as it was a positive experience (Carmel).

The interviewers were well qualified to do the interviews (Katie).

The personal qualities, such as empathy, understanding and compassion, displayed by the EVT members clearly contributed to the positive staff response. The impact of this style of leadership in which inter-personal relations are paramount and authentic is well documented in the literature. Leadership is about aligning and inspiring; being accessible, competent and having integrity (Higginson, 1996); must be credible and entail caring for others, mobility and listening (Kouzes & Posner, 2003). Kouzes and Posner (2003) also suggest that leaders should strive to be liked, as people don't follow a technique, but rather a person - the message and the embodiment of the message. Leaders are judged and supported by the attitudes they display, more so than by their behaviours (Duignan, 1997; Gronn & Ribbin, 1996; Southworth, 1995).

Another dynamic factor in the perceived success of the process at the two schools was the leadership demonstrated by the leaders of the EVT and the IRC at each of the schools. There was a good relationship evident between the school based coordinator and the Regional Supervisor of Schools. The coordinator of the IRC at both schools had met with the respective Regional Supervisor of Schools prior to the process being undertaken. Furthermore, both coordinators had involved parents and staff members in the process and



had portrayed a positive view of the process and the EVT members who would be visiting the school. The members of the school communities were given a reasonable understanding of the process before it was implemented and could therefore see its proposed purpose which in turn gave it personal meaning for the individuals. Armed with personal meaning, the participants were able to view the process positively. Generally speaking, they afforded the EVT credibility and, due to the information provided to them and the leadership provided by the IRC chairperson, they had ownership of the process as they understood it - enough to gain personal meaning from it. Clearly then, the participants accepted the process as credible and meaningful and this proved to be a good prototype for some positive outcomes.

This importance of empowering the school community with an ownership of school processes (such as CSR) is supported in the literature. The reality is that the school, as a living system, is constantly and naturally changing, self-renewing and self-organising (Oliver, 1996; Sungaila, 1995; Wheatley, 1992, 1999), and the context in which the school exists is rapidly changing in terms of accountability for performance and outcomes. Change is an inevitable and integral aspect of organisational life, particularly within the educational sphere (Oliver, 1996), but unless those involved in the change can find personal meaning in the process (Wheatley, 1999) they will not support it and therefore it is doomed to failure (Duignan, 2002; Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Having a credible EVT and a Regional Supervisor of Schools who displays a belief in the process provides the local community with a sense of ownership and belief that augers well for the outcome (Firestone & Fuhrman, 1998; Marsh, 2000).

This cooperative dynamic between the two pivotal players, the Regional Supervisor of Schools and the Coordinator of the IRC, indicates that the importance of the emergence of leadership in the CSR process is paramount. A further consequence of the presence of leadership was the professional development provided to staff and other school community members. Professional development is an essential precursor to planned change.

In contrast to St Michael's and St Kevin's, the other two schools, St Finbar's and St Mary's, both located in the northern region of the Diocese, displayed an overwhelming lack of support for, and confidence in, the process. Participants who expressed negative opinions believed that the focus of their conclusion was the negative interpretation of the process that the schools held, which was closely aligned to:

- the approach of the Regional Supervisor of Schools;
- the lack of professional standing of the Regional Supervisor of Schools;
- the relationship between the Regional Supervisor of Schools and the principal and other school based leaders; and
- the composition and modus operandum of the EVT.

There are many reasons which led the participants to arrive at a negative conclusion. The first is in direct contrast to the experience at St Michael's and St Finbar's and relates to the negative perception of the membership and approach of the EVT. Members of the EVT who were not school-based were viewed with suspicion as being out of touch with the realities of school life. Most members of the EVTs were regarded as not having the skills to undertake the task presented to them, including conducting interviews, class-room visits and writing an External Report.

The expertise – the empathy is what is missing. It was like an inspection. The people acted like supervisors in the traditional sense of the word. I saw empathy from the principal and a little from the RE supervisor. As far as the other two went, no. Inspectorial and threatening to teachers. The external visit and final report were not recognised by me or the staff overall – in particular the teaching staff ... They didn't recognise it as this school ... There is no empathy in our report because these people have none – they are in an office. The so-called experts were trying to baffle us with bullshit. Some of it we couldn't understand (Quentin).

As a team member, Marie didn't deliberately come to trash us. She was first time on a panel and had no experience or expertise. She had no understanding of the process! (Cathy)

The composition of the EVT at St Mary's was the same as at St Michael's and St Kevin's with two of the supervisors (RE and Curriculum) being common to both St Michael's and St Mary's. EVTs always have the respective local Regional Supervisor of Schools on them, and this - the Regional Supervisor of Schools - was the major negative contributing factor in the northern region. The Regional Supervisor was the only supervisor on the St Finbar's EVT.

Unlike the experience at the two southern schools, it appears as though the EVTs in the north were unable to act as a team and therefore acted as a cluster of individuals. As the designated leader of the EVT, the Regional Supervisor of Schools was unable to articulate an understanding of the process that was congruent with that stated by the diocesan documents. This resulted in the EVT lacking leadership and being unable to come to agreement on a

shared vision and, consequently, they were unable to articulate a positive message to the local school communities. This fostered a shared sense of suspicion and discontent among the school staffs and a line of questioning by some EVT members that was considered to be intimidating and inspectorial. Therefore the process was doomed to failure as the process lacked credibility, there was a lack of trust, and in contrast to the two southern schools, the participants felt unsupported and unappreciated (Kouzes & Posner, 2002) and as though they were not working towards a common goal (Limmerick et al., 1998).

Asking for trouble when you have three supervisors and one principal. The so-called experts were trying to baffle us with bullshit. Some of it we couldn't understand. They don't have grass roots understanding. You really need an experienced practising APRE from a school of similar size; yes you need a principal from a school of similar size. Yes, your supervisor from the region, I have no problem with that, they get paid enough money, they should be expected to do that. And the fourth member, I think just a good practising teacher who can empathise with teachers (Quentin).

... Skills on how to approach and speak to teachers in an appropriate way that isn't intimidating or threatening, so that people feel comfortable with the process ... Maybe it should be more driven by the school. I sort of felt that teachers were quite intimidated by the process. They were scared. They were worried about their programs, what would be said to them, their teaching strategies and the whole thing of being on show – it frightens people (Stella).

The visit by the external team affected the school dreadfully. It really did because of some of the individuals. Marie had a terrible effect. Telling a first year what to do – she was upset, and then she upset her peer teacher! When I went in for a second interview, I said “That’s great in your school, but you don’t give a hoot what we do here!” That was the impression of others also. It shouldn’t be down to personalities. This is the school and what we offer as a school. That’s not what happened and it left a really bad taste. The external team – everyone thought that [two practising principals] were great – thank God everyone said that we’ve [two practising principals] on the team because the other three weren’t trusted. Maybe it was personalities, their approach. You two came in talking to kids and having a good time – the kids loved it. The others came in asking questions – where’s this? What’s your preparation for that? Oh, you’re not doing that! At our school we ... I felt like saying, “I don’t care what you do at Longreach, Emerald ... this is how we do it!” (Cathy).

Clearly evident in the research findings, and consistent with the literature (Firestone & Fairman, 1998; Fullan, 2005; Kouzes & Posner, 2002, 1999; Marsh, 2000; Massell & Goertz, 1999; Price et al., 1995; Spillane, 1997, 1998) is the importance of the role of the Regional Supervisor of Schools in ensuring the success or otherwise of the process. The Regional Supervisor of Schools is charged with the task of leading the process, which includes educating school based personnel and helping with any needs they have in relation to the process. It is also necessary for the Regional Supervisor of Schools, through the

education and support provided, to portray the process as a positive worthwhile experience as people will not willingly devote time, energy and commitment to a process that they do not believe to be useful and worthwhile. As the “local” supervisor it is also incumbent on the Regional Supervisor of Schools to provide insights and clarification to the EVT in relation to issues and queries that may occur.

... as it is mandated that the Regional Supervisor of Schools be the chair of the panel, he needs to be at that school for a fairly large amount of time leading up to the renewal so that the supervisor knows the background, what’s going on, what’s happening, has a real sense of the school. So that when panel members go off half-cocked based on one observation, the supervisor can say that you’ve seen this, however ... Maybe a month before the visit the supervisor should get into the school and get a real understanding – what are the relationships, what are the challenges, what are the successes, before the panel arrives (Quentin).

The supervisor gave us an untrue indication of how much time it would take up. He should have been upfront. Tends to make people a little suspicious (Aileen).

The information we got was shoddy ... We didn’t know where to go ... We wanted to know where to go – what’s first etc? ... I didn’t feel that we were given enough direction on whom to survey, what to include, when and so on. And then the altercation between Ken and Nick – Nick was ready to punch Ken for his obnoxious, superior approach. But we expected that from Ken – to come in with the opinion of, “I’m the inspector” (Cathy).

My staff’s idea of the process really comes from me; whether they agree with it or like it or not. No one comes in and clarifies the purpose, the reason etc. This is a short-coming. The idea of really clarifying the purpose of why we are going through this process is essential. That is a big part of the problem. When people see the purpose and the end point, it is seen as worthwhile. We need an articulation of the purpose from the DCEO. Our supervisor just came in and said its business as usual – it wasn’t like that at all – people worked their tails off. He lied! The idea of really clarifying the purpose of why we are going through the process is essential. That is a big part of the problem. When people see the purpose and the end point it is seen as worthwhile. We need an articulation of the process from the DCEO by the supervisor (Dominic).

The third reason is the relationship that the principal and other key stakeholders at the school have with the Regional Supervisor of Schools. This relationship is usually characterised by collegiality at worst and close friendship and professional respect at best. The Regional Supervisor of Schools for the two northern schools, St Mary’s and St Finbar’s, did not engender any professional respect from the principals of the schools or from the members of the leadership teams of these schools. In fact, very few teachers or support staff even credited him with respect as a professional. To make matters worse, he had developed a negative relationship with members of the Leadership Team at St Mary’s which was evident

to and supported by other staff members at the school. This made the success of the process very difficult as the expertise and enthusiasm of a Regional Supervisor of Schools has a major impact on the success or otherwise of system initiatives (Firestone & Fairman, 1998; Fullan, 2005; Marsh, 2000; Massell & Goertz, 1999; Price et al., 1995; Spillane, 1997, 1998). This is compounded by the fact that the principal also has a major impact on how staff members perceive initiatives, and if it is evident that the principal is not supportive of the process, staff members will not be supportive either (Berman & McLaughlin, 1977).

Our renewal was in Week 7 of Term 4. This was imposed on us because of a typical foul up by the supervisor and also resulted in a panel being convened in a rush as no one wants to be out of their schools at this time of year. The supervisor put the report together over the weekend. In my opinion and experience, it should not be put together by one person, especially an incompetent person. Joe implemented [sic] that the supervisor with a super-vision for things and responsible for that area needed to be the person who goes in to renew them, assess them, inspect them. That came from a DCEO team meeting. There was no discussion with the principals regarding appropriateness, especially up here where our supervisor is a buffoon (Quentin).

I feel that the supervisor shouldn't have a role as he's not involved in the school on a day to day basis and when he is, he sees what we want him to see (Violet).

Our supervisor just came in and ran the party line that it'll be great. It's not like that at all and staff perceive it to be a sham, and him to be a fool (Dominic).

Clearly the disdain with which the Regional Supervisor of Schools was viewed was a major contributing factor to the lack of success of the process at St Mary's and St Finbar's. The results of the research are consistent with the literature in concluding that leadership involves "setting a direction and motivating others to follow" (Higginson, 1996, p. 26), and aligning and inspiring (Kouzes & Posner, 2003) and having integrity and credibility (Duignan, 2002) - none of this will happen if the leader is not respected. Kouzes and Posner (2003) also suggest that leaders should strive to be liked, as people don't follow a technique, but rather a person. Leaders will be judged and supported by the attitudes they display, more so than by their behaviours (Duignan, 1997; Gronn & Ribbin, 1996; Southworth, 1995).

A contributing factor to the call for fewer supervisors and more practitioners in the EVT is the belief that the entry style of the supervisor can be negative and can jeopardise the rest of the process. An associated concern is that, as the Regional Supervisor of Schools leads the process, the process is not uniform as it is open to the interpretation of the Regional Supervisor of Schools; it is evident that the Regional Supervisor of Schools who led the processes at St Mary's and St Finbar's did not have an understanding of how the process

works in the Rockhampton diocese. This should be considered as a major concern by Rockhampton Catholic Education as this particular supervisor had been in the role for more than eight years.

Given the many reservations and concerns stated by staff members, if the CSR process is to be a source of growth as its mandate suggests, there needs to be definite, sensitive, authentic leadership from the system authority. In the case of CSR, the system authority is synonymous with the Regional Supervisor of Schools.

It is suggested that the Regional Supervisor of Schools needs to display authentic leadership (Duignan, 1998, 1999, 2002) by comprehending the necessity for all staff members involved to gain an understanding of the nature and purpose of the process before they embark on it, so that they will better appreciate the potential benefits. If change is to occur successfully, staff members need to ascribe value and meaning to the change process and see that the change will benefit them personally (Wheatley, 1999). For this to occur, the process must be led by one who is himself or herself regarded as having the necessary attributes of authentic leadership (Duignan, 1998, 1999, 2002, 2003a, 2003b).

Authentic leadership requires moral and managerial attributes, the one being insufficient without the other (Sergiovanni, 1992). Personal integrity is one of the requisite attributes which “permeates through all the best manifestations of leadership” (Parry, 2002, p. 78); the Regional Supervisor of Schools must be seen to behave in a morally sustainable or morally right way. Samos argues that the primary goal of leadership is “grounded in moral imperatives” (2003, p. 10). One of the potential hurdles faced by educators in leadership roles is that they have very little experience in, or exposure to ethical and moral analysis. They therefore “lack the language to deal with and name moral issues” (Starratt, 2004, p. 4).

The model of CSR, particularly the examination phase, is based on extensive personal interaction, by way of face to face interviews and conversations. Inherent in the successful leadership by the Regional Supervisor of Schools is the need for a high level of skill in the area of personal interactions, an essential attribute in ensuring smooth and meaningful communications. Essential competencies include:

self-awareness; centredness; orientation towards relationship; sensitivity towards others; acceptance of difference; and ability to handle emotional reactivity in both themselves and others (Hede, 2003, p. 100).

The third emergent theme is the role of the principal in the CSR process.

### **6.2.3 The Role of the Principal**

The role of the principal in the entire CSR process (a five year cyclical process) was not one of the salient issues of this study; rather, the role of the principal during the examination phase of the process was of significance from the personal perspectives of the staff members involved. As stated above, there is scope for further study to be done in the area of the role of the principal in carrying out the recommendations and in fostering the commendations that comprise the CSR External Report. If not challenged to change, there is a tendency for many school leaders to neglect the changing professional and educational aspects of their work (O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998). CSR is a worthwhile process to assist principals and school leaders to question the status quo, particularly in schools with long traditions of success and high achievement.

The diocesan guidelines state clearly that the principal does not lead the CSR process in his/her school. Indeed, the principal does not have an active role at all. The encouraged practice is for Assistants to the Principal (Religious Education) to lead the IRC while the principal takes a passive role. Each of the four principals associated with the research project responded to this differently. Responses ranged from acceptance of and compliance with the policy by the principals of St Michael's, St Finbar's and St Kevin's, to a complete disregard of the policy by the principal of St Mary's who undertook much of the work and protected his staff from much of the labour intensive work that they would normally have undertaken.

All of the principals believed that they should have an active role, a view that is aligned with that of the literature where it is recognised that, as the main change agent in a school, the principal needs to be at the forefront of any review or change process. Contemporary authors have repeatedly reported that effective leadership is usually provided by the principal (Duignan, 1997; Fullan, 2005; Snowdon & Gorton, 1998; Starratt, 2004). The literature further states that it is unwise not to involve the principal as the attitude of the principal is

contagious. The onus is on the principal to articulate the need for change and the vision inherent in renewal. As leader, he/she is the “primary engine” (Fullan, 2005, p. 27) in sustaining the vision of the school and in promoting change. If the principal sees no value in a process, the process will not be successful as staff members become aware of the principal’s view and respond accordingly (Fullan, 2005).

There is a strong correlation between principals who are good facilitators and managers of change, and principals who are strong supporters of their staffs and are prepared to be innovative and forward moving (Wohlsetter, 1997). As these principals have the ability to both motivate staff and facilitate (or hinder) change, they are central to the successful implementation of change (Bolam, 1993; Starratt, 2004).

The principal is responsible for working in a partnership with parents to act as a steward of the school’s purposes and structures, while also endeavouring to serve those who struggle to embody these purposes (Sergiovanni, 1996). As the leader of the school, “the principal should direct his or her efforts to connecting parents, teachers and students morally to each other, while placing what’s best for the students at the centre of all decision-making” (Sergiovanni, 1996, p. 83). The principal will practice authentic leadership (Bhindi & Duignan, 1997) which allows for the public declaration of the values, purposes and virtues (Sergiovanni, 1992) espoused by the school, as well as professional and political leadership (Riley, 2000). This in turn adds an element of value specification, articulation and exhibition to the role of the principal (Campbell-Evans, 1993).

If the above were to be implemented as part of the examination phase of the CSR process, it would permit the principal to take an active role as the leader of the internal process at his/her school. This would provide the principal with the means to provide witness to the value of the process as well as allowing him/her to provide authentic leadership (Duignan, 1998, 1999, 2002, 2003a, 2003b). This in turn would lead to staff members and other members of the school community seeing value in the process and gaining personal meaning (Wheatley, 1999). All would see value in the process and have ownership of the process which would auger well for positive outcomes.



### 6.2.3.1 Case Study Feedback on the Role of the Principal

A belief shared by the four principals is that the principal should have, at the very least, a substantial involvement in the examination phase of CSR and, possibly, lead the process. The two northern region principals stated that they were offended by the suggestion that they should be excluded from the process; both relayed the story that the northern Regional Supervisor of Schools regularly argued that “the principal could ‘fix’ the outcomes” and, more specifically, “there was an instance where the principal changed/doctored the results of the internal review to make the school and himself look better”.

The thing that really bugs me is the myth that principals shouldn’t be involved in the process because somewhere, some principal at some time tried to change something from the report. If that’s the Regional Supervisor of Schools’ idea of renewal, it conflicts with mine. If you are concerned with this then it is an inspection and not a source of growth. (Dominic).

I did take offence as principal by the exclusion of the principal in the internal process – the APRE was the Chair of the committee. I don’t think you can leave the leader out, and in fact tell staff little stories that there was a nun once, or there was a principal once who doctored the reports. Those little anecdotes don’t do justice to the integrity of the principal – that was said to staff – we can’t trust principals, they’ll doctor it! (Quentin).

The stories that were relayed by the northern Regional Supervisor of Schools were demeaning of the profession and had a personal impact on the principals. Furthermore, the principals of the region believe them to be untrue stories. However, the Regional Supervisor of Schools constantly retelling the stories has impacted greatly on these principals’ view of the Regional Supervisor of Schools as unprofessional; it adds to their disdain for him as a professional charged with the task of leading the examination phase of the CSR process at their schools.

The third principal (from another region) stated:

The other thing I would like to change is the preamble about who does what. Currently it is the APRE. I think the principal should be more involved in the organisation. A team approach is still necessary, but we need to highlight the *Shared Wisdom* approach – a clearer definition of who coordinates the process (Donna).

This principal’s concern about the need to clarify the definition of who coordinates the process has been addressed since the research was conducted, with the CSR document (Davis, 1999a) now being explicit in covering this. The document also clearly states that:

It is traditional for the team to be led by the Assistant to the Principal – Religious Education (APRE) in the primary school. In the case of either a primary school or a secondary school it **should not be the principal** (Davis, 1999a, p. 16).

The role of the principal is stated as being to:

- outline the underlying principles which will guide the operations of the Internal Review Committee;
- clarify the roles and tasks of the Internal Review Committee; and
- make budgetary provision for the work of the Committee and the Validation process (Davis, 1999a, p. 16).

However, it is evident from discussions with the principals that their real concern is not that there is a clarification of who does what but that the principal, without taking on autonomous leadership of the process, should be permitted to be more involved.

At St Mary's, the principal saw no value in the process whatsoever – a fact that was clear to the staff who in turn placed no value on it. This was due to a number of factors, paramount of which was the relationship that the principal had with the Regional Supervisor of Schools, to whom the principal conceded no credibility. Other factors were the perceived unprofessional way in which the Regional Supervisor of Schools had portrayed the process; the selection of and perceived attitude of the EVT; and the 'Them and Us' view that the staff had of the school and Rockhampton Catholic Education. The latter was generated by the negative relationship between the school principal and the Regional Supervisor of Schools.

It seems that it would be prudent for Rockhampton Catholic Education to initially permit, and then encourage, principals to be more actively involved as it is the principal who:

- has the ability to motivate staff;
- is central to the change process as the key change agent ;
- has the experience of leading others; and
- can therefore *make or break the process* (O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998; Wohlsetter, 1997).

Unlike the diocese of Rockhampton, in England and Wales the principal has full responsibility for the school's internal management of the inspection (Clegg & Billington, 1994). In the US, the principal coordinates the collection of data, and its interpretation and analysis (Keefe & Howard, 1997). It seems that having the principal fully involved in the data collection and analysis is worthwhile as many of the positive changes are a result of the preparation for the review rather than the review itself (Riley & Rowles, 1997).

It is evident from the data gathered that merely having a process does not guarantee a successful outcome. The data has in fact indicated that the Regional Supervisor of Schools entrusted with the task of implementing the process at the two northern region schools was responsible for its demise. Therefore, it would seem appropriate for the process to be led by the principal who has the vision to inspire, motivate and involve others (Higginson, 1996) while relaying the message that the process is a worthwhile experience that should be taken seriously (O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998; Wohlsetter, 1997).

The second research question was "How does the process of Catholic School Renewal ensure quality Catholic education?"

### **6.3 How Does the Process of Catholic School Renewal Ensure Quality Catholic Education?**

This study has clearly identified one of the purposes of CSR as being a means of ensuring quality Catholic education within schools. The question, "How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a way of ensuring quality Catholic education?" featured as one of the central research questions in the survey questionnaire, the answers to which will assist in informing the current discussion. However, it is in an analysis of the overall responses to the interview questions that a significant contribution to this question lies. That is, while not necessarily responding to this question per se, many participants, in general discussion alluded to and gave insights into this area. It is therefore important to initially draw upon the literature and reclarify what is meant by Catholic education.

#### **6.3.1 The Nature and Purpose of Catholic Education**

Arriving at a definition of the nature and purpose of Catholic education would have been far easier to accomplish in the early days of this education system than it is today. The system was established in Australia in 1870 on the premise that the schools would possess "a religious and educational influence on the students over and above their families" (Flynn, 1993, p. xi). The schools were to be places where "Christianity would permeate all education, where every kind of instruction was to be interpenetrated by Catholic doctrine, by Catholic feeling and practice" (Fogarty, 1957, p. 188). The system was established to provide Catholic children with a Catholic world in which to grow up (Purnell, 1985), away from the oppression and hostility of the Protestant majority (Crawford & Rossiter, 1986), and as a condemnation of the "rampant and aggressive secularism" (Collins, 1991, p. 107) of the public schools. In this world, Catholics would be able to attain upward social mobility

and “make their way on earth by loving God and neighbour and thus work out their eternal salvation by striving for the glory of God both on earth and the hereafter in heaven” (Elias, 1988, p. 17).

The Second Vatican Council viewed Catholic education in a different light as part of the “massive paradigm shift in Catholicism ... moving the tradition into a global and contemporary context” (Ludwig, 1995, p. 35) and away from the “inward looking hostile to the world, sacred fortress mentality” (Treston, 1997, p. 16, cf *Divini Magistri*, 1929, par. 299) that had previously been adopted.

The Declaration on Christian Education was published as a result of the Second Vatican Council’s exploration of the purpose of Catholic education. It states that the purpose of the Catholic school is “directed towards the formation of the human person in view of his [sic] final end and the good of that society to which he [sic] belongs and in the duties of which he [sic] will, as an adult, have a share” (Flannery, 1996a, par. 1).

At the Australian National Catholic Education Conference in 1996, Cardinal Laghi stated that “Catholic education must maintain fidelity to the good news proclaimed by the church” (Laghi, 1996). At this time the purpose of Catholic education could be said to incorporate the four elements of:

- Message
- Community
- Service
- Worship.

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, in acknowledgement of the changing nature of the Catholic Church and Catholic education, and the need for some contemporary thought and direction, the Queensland Bishops commissioned an extensive research project to look at the future of Catholic schools. The 2004 Rockhampton diocesan report into the future of Catholic schools, *An Encounter with Christ - Defining Features of Catholic Schools in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Diocesan Education Council, 2004) identifies one of the six defining features of Catholic education in the diocese as “[having] a clear Catholic identity”. *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1998) states clearly that “the fundamental purpose of Catholic schools is to create an

educational environment promoting authentic humanity” (McLaughlin, 2000, p. 1), “... a school for the human person and of human persons ... where the promotion of the human person is the goal” (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1998, pars. 8 & 9). The *Diocesan Learning Framework* (Stower, 2004) states the purpose of Catholic education as “inviting and challenging learners of all ages to be and become reflective and self-directed as we journey with Christ in our ever-changing world”.

Cook (2004) provides a contemporary list of challenges facing Catholic schools if they are to maintain and retain a Catholic identity:

1. to operate as excellent schools (with limited resources);
2. to ensure that the Catholic message and vision permeate the school curriculum and cultures;
3. to recruit and retain teachers who understand and promote the Catholic message; and
4. to reconcile the tensions between Catholic school vision and twenty-first century reality.

The Catholic school is a community of people who come together in pursuit of the common goal of providing a Christian education and promoting authentic humanity for its young. CSR presents an opportunity for members of that community to refocus and renew their consensus about the basic purposes and identity of the school in the light of the Catholic Church’s vision and the message of the Gospel (Keane & Keane, 1997). CSR is an opportunity to examine and assess the school’s performance, value for money, reliability, competence, and so on (Paine et al., 1992). It also provides an opportunity for the school to pursue its constant aim of contact and dialogue with the students’ families (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1998, par. 20).

While CSR is a multi-layered phenomenon that can be constructed in a number of different ways, it is also a great opportunity for organisational growth through planned interventions and for educational reform as well as providing an authentic response to the enactment of the reign of God in the world (Spry, 2000).

### **6.3.2 Case Study Feedback on Whether Catholic School Renewal Ensures Quality Catholic Education**

It was generally felt that the process of CSR does ensure quality Catholic education, although there was a substantial difference between the views of staff members at St

Finbar's and others (a high standard deviation of 1.14). Typical of the responses regarding CSR from St Finbar's are:

I doubt that this process has improved teaching/learning in any way in the school.

I found the renewal process to be rather ineffective. The stress and amount of work etc. that went on before the examination phase was ridiculous and as far as I can see there hasn't been a great benefit from it. Some of the suggestions were taken on board but nothing has really changed within the school. I think as teachers we are under enough pressure and have enough work to do without this extra burden.

Good idea in theory but was a total waste of time. Stressed everyone. Nothing has changed or improved.

I think that the report ends up as a 'book' published for the external team. It shouldn't be – it should be for our use. Most of the questions in the surveys were useless. We made the mistake of adapting another school's survey.

Seventy-five per cent of those interviewed at St Finbar's expressed a view that the process did not improve outcomes for children and therefore did not ensure quality Catholic education. This view was supported by the survey questionnaire data. The St Finbar's participants held a strong belief that the process was undertaken for the benefit of Rockhampton Catholic Education and was about quality assurance and had nothing to do with ensuring quality Catholic education but rather compliance with Rockhampton Catholic Education's expectations.

While most of the staff members who were interviewed at the other three schools expressed negative views, this was not supported by the data gathered with the survey questionnaires. In general, staff members from these three schools (St Mary's, St Michael's and St Kevin's) were more positive in their responses than their colleagues at St Finbar's. Positive comments included:

.. it allows for an opportunity for reflection, and for us to embrace and discover if we are doing the right thing. Teachers need to be assessed to see that they are doing the right thing ... It brings the Catholicity and the practice together and it is a form of accountability ... Everyone has to be inspected at some time – we have simply changed the name ... Everyone needs to be assessed, and therefore surely something must come of it.

Parents are very aware of the renewal process. They show keenness to actively be a part of it. This guarantees a free, open, welcome culture which helps to ensure quality schooling. The process helps to reassure parents.

Renewal plays a large part in ensuring quality. Parents can see that the school is being pro-active towards quality. As a parent of three children in the school, I felt very

informed about what the renewal team was doing and why. I felt happy that my children were receiving a quality Catholic education.

The more parents are involved and interested colours the percentage of assurance they receive because the process attempts to look at and view closely all areas, and continuously inform parents.

I feel that renewal, combined with what parents see and experience from day to day, reinforces the idea that teachers are encouraged to reveal their strengths and weaknesses and let us know that they are still accountable. This helps parents to be aware that teachers are doing a good job.

Parents are already aware that children receive quality Catholic education. This process reinforces this by showing the different levels and areas that are covered in the examination.

Some staff, however, raised issues about how the process did not contribute to quality Catholic education. There were qualified responses such as:

I believe that the idea of a renewal is good, but the external team having so much power is not right in my opinion.

While not perfect, the renewal process is worthwhile and the best option I can think of. A bit like democracy – not perfect but the best we have.

Issues such as the process being an imposition, not being constructive, and being used to “push through system directives” (Quentin) were all lamented.

As stated in 6.4, it is in an analysis of the overall responses to the interview questions that there lies a significant contribution to the question “How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a way of ensuring quality Catholic education?” CSR delves into the culture of the school. It examines and unearths the attitudes and beliefs that members of the school community hold about their organisation. If the school is delivering quality Catholic education to its students, then this will be evident in the discussions that take place during CSR. Conversely, it will be clear if the school is failing to meet this obligation.

The nature and extent of Catholic education that students receive is evident in the values, beliefs, behaviours, rules, products, signs and symbols (Donahue, 1997) that bind the members of the school together. The examination phase of CSR shines a spotlight on these myriad facets of the school. Further, the processes employed in the examination phase bring into the discussion arena a number of behaviours, attitudes and beliefs which operate in an

unconscious or semi-conscious way (Halsall, 1998) and which, without the enactment of CSR, would never be discussed, questioned or even enter the school community conscience.

Indeed, one of the fundamental and long-standing elements of Catholic education has been identified as the provision of a platform where beliefs, feelings and attitudes can be voiced, where deep reflection is encouraged and where criticism is invited and given a response. The Congregation for Catholic Education (1977, pars. 64 & 67; 1988, par. 38) has stated that:

Before we speak, we must take great care to listen to what people say, but more especially, what they have in their hearts to say. Only then, will we understand them and respect them, and even as far as possible, agree with them.

So, while participants in the examination phase raised negative issues (such as teacher stress and unworkable relationships) which would suggest that the quality of Catholic education in the school is being compromised, there is a fulfilment of the Catholic Charter in making available the opportunity to raise and discuss these and any other issues. CSR presents an opportunity for members of the school community to refocus and renew their consensus about the basic purposes and identity of the school in the light of the Catholic Church's vision and the message of the Gospel (Keane & Keane, 1997).

This is to say that while Catholic schools are, in the first instance, accountable to the Catholic Church for the promotion of Christian values, they must also account to parents and caregivers to ensure that children entrusted to their care receive a quality Catholic education (NCEC Annual Report, 1998). The process of CSR involves parents and caregivers during the data collection stage of the examination phase and when the findings are reported back to them at the conclusion of this phase. Thus, the involvement of parents and caregivers in the process of CSR goes some way to ensuring quality Catholic education.

The third research question explores the notion of Catholic School Renewal as a useful quality assurance tool.



#### **6.4 How is the Process of Catholic School Renewal a Useful Quality Assurance Tool?**

Rockhampton Catholic Education is accountable, in the first instance, to the diocesan bishop and, secondly, to the State and Federal Governments. Therefore Rockhampton Catholic Education, to ensure continued accreditation of its schools, is obliged by mandate to provide evidence that it abides by the standards set by governments. One of the avenues by which it does this is CSR which has as one of its prime purposes to serve as a quality assurance tool.

This research attempts to identify whether, from the personal perspectives of some staff members from a selection of primary school communities that undertook the examination phase of the CSR process, the process is a useful quality assurance tool.

An analysis of the data gathered from the survey questionnaire in Chapter 5 revealed that, as a quality assurance tool, the process has credibility but it is too stressful, time consuming and labour intensive.

As discussed in the previous research question, it is in an analysis of the wider discussions that take place in response to the interview questions that a significant contribution to this question - "How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a useful quality assurance tool?" - can be discerned.

Emerging from the interviews with participants was the widespread assumption that the validation of the Internal Report by the EVT served as Catholic Education's quality assurance tool. How useful a quality assurance tool they believed this to be can be found in the participants' discussions about the EVT and its role in the process of CSR.

##### **6.4.1 External Validation Team**

The great majority of interviewees and survey questionnaire participants at St Michael's made positive comments about the composition of the EVT and/or the approach of the team. There were no negative comments about the EVT, although not all were comfortable with the Rockhampton Catholic Education personnel as is evidenced by:

I would have felt much better if they had been people who work in a school every day. I see the supervisors as DCEO and not within the school domain, as people who are in charge of different areas (Pamela).

A major concern to emerge from the survey questionnaires at St Kevin's was that the process is open to the interpretation of the Regional Supervisor of Schools, as opposed to there being a common approach across the diocese and from school to school. Some of the data gathered from the interviews were quite scathing of the process.

The issue of having an external team to validate the results of the Internal Report had mixed reactions from the staff at St Kevin's, with one participant stating that "the outside team makes it lose credibility" (Zeta), while adding that "it would be difficult to have an authentic renewal without some sort of objective insight". Another stated, "I feel the input of the visiting team was valuable" (Betty).

The literature is almost unanimous in its affirmation of the concept of people external to the school validating the review/change process. O'Donoghue & Dimmock (1998) report that the similarities of school improvement efforts between unrelated attempts around the world are surprising, and that the similarities far outweigh the differences.

The Office for Standards in Education (OfSTED) in England and Wales uses school review teams that are comprised of people who are not usually associated with the school. Since 1996 schools in Hong Kong have been working with "a framework by which to monitor and assure quality" (O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998, p. 57) which has utilised EVT's (Education Commission, 1996). The New Zealand approach sees Catholic schools undertaking four types of reviews. The Education Review Office (ERO) is responsible for undertaking the reviews and does so using an interdisciplinary EVT whose task is to "help the institution assess its own progress towards achieving its objectives (catalyst role) and to provide a public audit of performance in the public interest (audit role)" (Task Force, 1988, p. 60).

As is the case in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton, in England and Wales, Hong Kong and New Zealand, the EVT writes a report which is presented to the community (Clegg & Billington, 1994; Gibson, 1998; Hopkins et al., 1994; Rae, 1997). This provides the local community with a sense of finality to the actual review, while providing them with a springboard for the formulation of a Development or Action Plan.

The literature pertaining to three Australian states revealed that all have utilised the services of external teams who then presented a report to the community. Teams in New South Wales

were comprised mainly of external people, but also included the representation of a local community member (Cuttance, 1997). South Australian reviews were undertaken by the Education Review Unit (ERU) and included external people as well as the principal of the school under review (Bolan, 1993). The Victorian experience differs to the other Australian approaches in that “it is monitored through an independent external verification process involving an External School Reviewer” (Gurr, 2001). The difference is that the Education Department did not lead the external teams, but rather employed contractors to do so.

It is interesting to note that the Office of Non State School Education (ONSSE) in Queensland is currently investigating how reviews of non-state schools will be undertaken as a means of satisfying accreditation requirements. The ONSSE has accepted and endorsed reviews which are comprised of an internal review with an external validation, such as the approach of Rockhampton Catholic Education.

It is reasonable to respond to the queries about the validity of having an EVT by referring to the experiences of a number of international and national experiences. While the implementation of external validators differs, the concept is almost universal and regarded as useful. There seems to be some resistance to the EVT concept by some staff members in the Rockhampton diocese. This appears to be because of the personnel involved and their own lack of understanding of the process, and their ability to utilise the tools at their disposal, more so than the concept of external validation.

Emergent from the interviews with some staff members at St Kevin’s was the belief that a change to the composition of the EVT is necessary for two reasons. The first reason comes from an assumption that people who are not school-based are “out of touch” (Alan). As reported above, there is no agreement in the literature on what the composition of an EVT should be, and therefore no agreement that non school-based people should not be involved. However, in response to the assertion that non school-based people are out of touch, and the associated presumption that this therefore makes them less than useful, an increasing number of studies in recent years have documented that districts, manifest in the Rockhampton diocese by the activities of Regional Supervisors of Schools, do play a key role and are important agents of change (Chrispeels, 1997; Fullan, 2005, Kirp & Cyrus, 1995; Massell & Goertz, 1999; Spillane, 1996, Starratt, 2004). The cognitive understanding and knowledge that Regional Supervisors of Schools have of reform efforts (e.g. the CSR process) has a

considerable effect on how well or otherwise reforms are implemented and resourced in a district (Marsh, 2000; Massell & Goertz, 1999; Price et al., 1995; Spillane, 1997, 1998). For example, two of the schools implemented the process with minimal discontent, while the other two did not. The research suggests that the Regional Supervisors of Schools involved with St Michael's and St Kevin's had a cognitive understanding and knowledge that contributed positively to the change effort, while their northern colleague did not (Marsh, 2000; Massell & Goertz, 1999; Price et al., 1995; Spillane, 1997, 1998).

The research does not support Alan's assertion generally. However, inherent in the literature is the possibility of the reverse, that the Regional Supervisors of Schools could play a major negative role if they do not have a good knowledge and/or understanding of the process. There was no evidence to suggest that this was the case at St Michael's or St Kevin's, although the data do suggest this phenomenon in relation to St Mary's and St Finbar's.

Donna commented that the EVT did not have enough practitioners, making no case for a different composition other than the possibly related area of it being good to involve peer principals as "it is good for peer principals' professional development". Again, the assumption is made that people who are not school-based, that is supervisors, are in some way deficient when it comes to being a part of the EVT. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this is related more to school-based personnel being more comfortable in the presence of other school-based personnel than in the presence of people whom they regard as being further up the promotional ladder.

A major concern at St Kevin's was the belief that the process is open to the interpretation of the Regional Supervisor of Schools. This presented two perceived problems. The first was that the Regional Supervisor of Schools could come into the validation process with his own personal and professional agendas. Donna, the principal at St Kevin's held the belief that:

The entry style of the supervisor can be negative and jeopardise the rest of the process ... the team comes in with a hidden agenda. Issues arise that don't seem to be there in the reports. There is a lot of secrecy on the part of the team. The staff had a perception that there was an inquisition regarding a particular issue.

The latter point is supported by Zeta's comment that "I felt uncomfortable being interrogated about the principal, fee collection etc."

It is evident that the process is in the hands of the Regional Supervisor of Schools as the leader of the process and in particular the leader of the EVT. If the Regional Supervisor of Schools did have a personal agenda, this would indicate a lack of understanding of the process by the Regional Supervisor of Schools and would impact on the process in a negative way as there is another, unrelated process, to address issues of concern regarding the performance of principals. If the Regional Supervisor of Schools was to bring a personal agenda to the process, it would indicate a lack of understanding of the process by the Regional Supervisor of Schools as well as a substantial deficiency in the authenticity of the Regional Supervisor of Schools as a leader.

The second problem is associated with the lack of consistency across the diocese if each of the four Regional Supervisors of Schools has a different interpretation and therefore implementation of the process. Evelyne, herself the spouse of a Regional Supervisor of Schools, believed that:

There is no consistency between supervisors' understandings of the process and therefore the implementation of the process. An example is that some look in classrooms and others don't or do it in a different fashion.

This could, and evidently did, result in the process looking very different at different schools, resulting in many anomalies in terms of not only the process, but also the results, the level of satisfaction and the credibility. Donna suggested that this could be overcome with the employment of a *Catholic Schools Renewal Officer* who would ensure comparability, uniformity and consistency across the diocese.

Seventy-five percent of the staff interviewed at St Finbar's were satisfied with the composition and modus operandum of the EVT at the school, commenting, "The team was fine from my perspective. I don't know how the teams are picked, but it was no worries for me" (Aileen) and "The external team has its own criteria and that gives it credibility" (Aileen). This was supported by Bertha who commented that "the visit wasn't bad ... the people who came in realised that it was a nervous situation for us and were good". She later qualified this with "The external team was good, especially for someone new to it". Dominic stated "The makeup of the team here was good as it only had one supervisor". He went on to explain how he believes that external teams should not be comprised of supervisors, because the teams are more authentic if they are comprised of "people in the field who will stand up for themselves".

Ophelia objected to everything about the external team visit, stating, “I find it really hard that they can judge a school on being here for three days”. She added, “it seemed as though some of the recommendations came about from the comment of only a few people”. Tara was concerned about the interviews saying, “I do think that the interviewing process could have been done better”. In common with the data from St Kevin’s, Tara stated, “the questions that were directed to us put us in a very difficult situation at times”. This was supported by Quentin’s comment that:

It could be improved in lots of ways; I wouldn’t know where to start. Skills on how to approach and speak to teachers in an appropriate way that isn’t intimidating or threatening, so that people feel comfortable with the process.

There is a strong case in the literature for EVT’s, as most of the school reform approaches adopted nationally and internationally utilise the services of such teams. However, it has been stated in this document that team membership in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton is governed by:

1. the particular role that a person holds;
2. who is available at the time; and
3. who it is deemed will be good for the school, or will gain personal benefit from being involved.

Team membership is negotiated between the principal and the Diocesan Director of Catholic Education who ultimately appoints a team (Davis, 1999a). There is a case for more stringent guidelines for selection of EVT members, as well as a process to induct them into the role. This would include relevant information about the process, skills needed, and information that is specific to the school under examination.

## **6.5 Summary**

The purpose of this chapter has been to discuss the findings presented in the previous chapter. The three research questions provided the structure through which the major findings of the research were discussed:

1. How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a source of potential growth?
2. How does the process of Catholic School Renewal ensure quality Catholic Education?

3. How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a useful quality assurance tool?

### **6.5.1 How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a source of potential growth?**

The term “potential growth” as used in Rockhampton Catholic Education documentation was explored in relation to Wheatley’s chaos theory (Wheatley, 1992) and planned educational change, in particular the changes brought about as a result of the CSR process.

Initial analysis of the data in relation to this question generated major conflicting and contrasting outcomes with the staff at two schools believing that the process is positive, while their colleagues at the other (northern) two schools were critical of the process. Three dominant themes emerged:

1. The process;
2. The composition of the EVT and the role of the Regional Supervisor of Schools; and
3. The role of the principal.

The data relating to this question were discussed with these themes as the lenses.

#### **6.5.1.1 The Process**

In relation to the first theme, the process, identified issues were:

1. ownership of the process at the local school level;
2. teacher leadership, the lack of recognition of teachers as leaders and the added stress placed on teachers; and
3. the perceived lack of impact that the process has on student learning.

#### **6.5.1.2 The Composition of the EVT and the Role of the Regional Supervisor of Schools**

The discussion on *the composition of the EVT and the role of the Regional Supervisor of Schools* revealed contrasting views. Two of the schools were generally happy with the EVT and Regional Supervisor of Schools while the other two (northern) schools were scathing. This discussion is supported in the literature which states that supervisors do make a difference (Fullan, 2005; Marsh, 2000; Massell & Goertz, 1999; Price et al., 1995; Spillane,

1997, 1998), and that shared leadership is essential for the success of a change process (Cheng, 1996; Crowther et al., 2001; Fullan, 2005; Limerick et al., 1998; Ogawa & Bossert, 1995; Riley et al., 2001; Sultmann & McLaughlin, 2000).

Results of the research were consistent with the literature (Elmore & Burney, 1999; McGaw, 1997; Quinn, 2000) in establishing that staff need professional development before the process. The participants from the northern schools felt that they were not given enough information before the process began.

### **6.5.1.3 The Role of the Principal**

The four principals believe that the principal should have an active role in the process as they contend, consistent with the literature, that effective leadership is usually provided by the principal and that, because of his/her attitude being contagious, it is unwise not to involve the principal (Duignan, 1997; Fullan, 2005; Snowdon & Gorton, 1998; Starratt, 2004). Also, as the principal is responsible for working in partnership with parents (Sergiovanni, 1996), he or she should practise authentic leadership while leading the process (Bhindi & Duignan, 1997).

### **6.5.2 How does the process of Catholic School Renewal ensure quality Catholic education?**

Participants generally felt that the process does ensure quality Catholic education, although participants from St Finbar's were less positive than their colleagues at the other three schools. It was evident from the responses that CSR unearths the attitudes and beliefs of members of the school community by delving into the culture of the school. Discussions that take place during the process elucidate whether the school is delivering quality Catholic education or otherwise. CSR presents an opportunity for members of the school community to refocus and renew their consensus about the basic purposes and identity of the school in the light of the Catholic Church's vision and the message of the Gospel (Keane & Keane, 1997).

### **6.5.3 How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a useful quality assurance tool?**

An analysis of the data gathered from the survey questionnaire in Chapter 5 revealed that, as a quality assurance tool, the process has credibility but it is too stressful, time consuming and labour intensive. However, emerging from the interviews with participants was the



widespread assumption that the validation of the internal report by the EVT served as Rockhampton Catholic Education's quality assurance tool. This is consistent with the literature which is almost unanimous in its support of the concept of an EVT (Bolam, 1993; Cuttance, 1997; Gurr, 2001). How useful a quality assurance tool individual participants believed this to be depended on the participant's opinions of the EVT.

Any concerns that participants held were based on their perceptions of individual members of the EVT, more so than the concept. There were a few concerns that there appeared to be too many non practitioners – supervisors - on the EVT. These concerns are related to the individuals in the roles; the literature clearly states, as do the majority of the data gathered from this research project, that if supervisors have a sound cognitive understanding and knowledge of the process, they have a considerable positive effect on the outcome (Marsh, 2000; Massell & Goertz, 1999; Price et al., 1995; Spillane, 1997, 1998).

A synthesis and review of the findings are presented in Chapter 7.

# Chapter Seven

## Conclusions and Recommendations

### 7.1 Introduction

This study explores Catholic School Renewal in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton from the perspectives of those school communities which have been involved in renewal. Specifically, the problem is explored from the personal perspectives of staff members from a selection of those primary school communities that undertook the examination phase of Catholic School Renewal.

The purpose of this chapter is to present the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

### 7.2 Context and Design of the Research

The study is set within the context of Diocesan Catholic Education in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton. The case is comprised of four diocesan primary schools located in three of the four regions of the diocese, with participants being staff members employed at the schools during the time of the research.

As the purpose of the study is to explore a phenomenon from the particular personal perspectives of staff members, an interpretive approach to research was employed. Within this approach, quantitative and qualitative data were used as it is appropriate to combine measures from both these research approaches (Merriam, 1998) as both approaches have unique strengths and complement each other (Howe, 1995).

The epistemological position of constructionism was adopted because it takes into account the impact which engagement with the research exerts on participants' construction of meaning (Crotty, 1998). As the focus of this study was explored from the personal perceptions or interpretations of staff members from four Catholic primary schools, it was particularly appropriate to adopt the *interpretive* paradigm, or theoretical perspective. *Symbolic interactionism* was selected as an appropriate orientation because it directs the researcher to place primary importance on the social meanings people attach to the world around them, and to adopt the perspective of those being studied (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Symbolic interactionism aims to approach human behaviour from the standpoint of society rather than biology (Longmore, 1998) and acknowledges that the meanings which

participants give to their experiences is shaped by their situation; it is therefore necessary to observe participants in context (Crotty, 1998).

As the focus of the study has been to explore CSR from the personal perspectives of some staff members, it was useful to adopt a *case study* approach to investigate the phenomenon. Case studies “concentrate on the way particular groups of people confront specific problems, taking a holistic view of the situation. They are problem-centred, small scale, entrepreneurial endeavours” (Shaw, 1978, cited in Merriam, 1998, p. 11) which involve the collection and recording of data and the preparation of a report or presentation of the case (Stenhouse, 1985a). Case study is an appropriate approach when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within a real life context (Burns, 1994) when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1981). Because CSR is an educational process, case study was a useful means of examining it as case study is used to examine educational processes, problems and programs to bring about an understanding that may affect, and possibly improve, practice (Merriam, 1998).

Semi-structured interviews and a survey questionnaire were selected as the research strategies used to gather data for the study. The interviews were supported by audio-tape recordings and the researcher’s field notes. Archival research and document analysis were undertaken in order to identify the schools for the case. The time period for data collection was between March 2001 and September 2002. The procedure for data collection and subsequent analysis was embedded within the need to engage the participants in a process of interpretation and reinterpretation of data as they were collected, consistent with the orientation of symbolic interactionism (Beattie, 2001).

Firstly the interview data were analysed and presented school by school, with salient features being identified. Secondly, the survey questionnaire data were presented using the four independent measures and ten dependent measures which had orchestrated the gathering of the data. The four independent measures were:

1. Gender (male or female)
2. Role (Teacher or Other Staff)
3. Age (20 – 30, 31 – 40, 41 – 50, 51+)
4. School (St Mary’s, St Finbar’s, St Kevin’s, St Michael’s)

The ten dependent measures were the questions, with questions four and six comprising three measures each:

1. It is claimed that Catholic School Renewal is an ongoing and continuous cycle over a four or five year period of time. To what extent has this been your experience?
2. To what extent has it been your experience that the Catholic School Renewal process assures parents that their children have access to a quality Catholic education?
3. In your opinion how much ownership did the staff of your school have of the most recent Catholic School Renewal process?
4. It is claimed that the Catholic School Renewal process is a source of growth. In your experience how effective has the process been as a source of growth:
  - i. Spiritually
  - ii. Personally
  - iii. Professionally
5. Drawing on your personal experience of Catholic School Renewal to what extent do you believe the process to be credible?
6. Please comment on the following with regard to the effect that the most recent examination phase of the Catholic School Renewal process at your school had.
  - i) Stress levels
  - ii) Time commitment
  - iii) Labour intensity

### **7.3 The Research Questions Addressed**

The structure for discussing the findings was the three research questions. Questions 1 and 3 incorporated themes as listed:

1. How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a source of potential growth?
  - The process
  - The composition of the External Validation Team and the role of the supervisor
  - The role of the principal.
2. How does the process of Catholic School Renewal ensure quality Catholic education?

### 3. How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a useful quality assurance tool?

- External Validation Team.

The questions provided a useful framework for a summary of the findings. It is evident that there is a close interrelationship between each question, so although each has been presented as a separate entity, they should not be viewed in isolation. The usefulness of the research lies in the extent to which the responses to the questions achieve credibility with the reader (Janesick, 2000). Sturman (1997), in addressing the issue of generalisability of one case study to a wider context, suggested that the reader may be able to draw some generalisations from a case study if the researcher has been able to document all the characteristics of the known case so that the reader has full knowledge of its context. It is therefore emphasised that the responses to the questions are not intended to be definitive, but have been presented to provide some understanding of the perceptions of CSR as described by some staff members in some Catholic primary schools in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton.

Each of the three questions is now addressed in relation to the four schools that are the case.

#### **7.3.1 Research Question One**

The first research question is:

##### **How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a source of potential growth?**

Participants had different insights into CSR as a source of potential growth depending on which school they worked at. Some participants were marginally supportive of the process, while others were quite supportive. The supportive participants viewed the process as a source of growth. Those participants who were extremely critical of the process were identified by the researcher as being from the same region (northern) and it became evident that participants' views were directly related to the approach and influence of the Regional Supervisor of Schools. Therefore the themes and subsequent sub-themes that emerged were variables that had not been identified as being significant prior to the commencement of the study, but as is the nature of qualitative research, emerged through the process of data collection.

##### **7.3.1.1 The Process**

The first theme to emerge was *The Process*, which in turn had a further three sub-themes:

- a. ownership of the process;

- b. teacher leadership; and
- c. student learning.

It was generally believed that the process was not owned by members of the school community – students, staff, parents, parish priest or wider community – as CSR occurs as a result of a diocesan policy and is not initiated locally, but rather as a result of a diocesan directive. It was felt that the policy on CSR was generated by a distant body and passed on to schools with no real contribution being made by the school. That is, a top down process with no local ownership. This is in direct contrast to Consequence 2 of the diocesan policy which states that “the School Renewal program is owned by the school community - students, staff, parents, priest, parish and the wider community” (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 2004). Participants believe that although Rockhampton Catholic Education states that the process is “life giving” and part of a living system (Oliver, 1996; Sungaila, 1995; Wheatley, 1992, 1999), the process of CSR is in fact a mechanical top down system that is imposed by Rockhampton Catholic Education.

The participants from St Michael’s and St Kevin’s saw value in the process as a means of accountability, and generally found it to be rewarding. Others considered the process to be a top down imposition that placed far too much pressure on staff members and was *a source of death* rather than a source of growth. Those participants who regarded the process as a top down imposition not only had no ownership of it, but, due to the approach of the Regional Supervisor of Schools, were unable to gain any sense of ownership or personal meaning as the process evolved.

All participants believed that the process is time consuming, labour intensive and increases staff members’ levels of stress. The southern and Rockhampton participants identified two major contributors to staff stress: (i) data gathering and internal report production for those involved; and (ii) class visits for class teachers – some class teachers were resentful of the practice of class visits and questioned the purpose and value of them. However, the majority of these participants also acknowledged that stress can be useful as a means of changing the status quo. These participants regarded the process as positive because of the composition and approach of the members of the EVT, the leadership provided by the Regional Supervisor of Schools and the Chair of the IRC, and the information provided to them about the purpose of the CSR process and the examination phase in particular.

The northern participants identified the same stressors as their southern colleagues, but did not see any positive outcomes of the stress. Their views were the complete opposite of the other participants. They were scathing of the composition and lack of ability, skills and credibility of the EVT and held the Regional Supervisor of Schools to account for their not having a sound knowledge of the purpose of the process and for the lack of meaningful relationships between himself and the school; they consequently afforded him no credibility or respect.

These participants identified that they were not provided with the necessary professional development to enable them to implement the change process. Generally they were of the opinion that this was because the Regional Supervisor of Schools did not understand the diocesan approach himself.

The outcome of any school improvement or change process should be to improve outcomes for students (Carter, 1994; Hopkins et al., 1994; O'Brien & Wylie, 2000) by the school accomplishing its goals more effectively and efficiently. Unfortunately there is no evidence that the process of CSR does result in improved outcomes for students, nor is there any recognition of the impact that teacher leadership as a concept can have on student learning.

#### **7.3.1.2 The Composition of the External Validation Team and the Role of the Regional Supervisor of Schools**

Those participants who regarded the composition of the EVT positively and saw it as contributing to the process being a source of potential growth did so because of the following factors.

They believed that the members of the EVT acted in a positive and sensitive manner and that they were well prepared for their task. This was manifest by a very professional approach which included advanced skills in interviewing and observation techniques. Personally each of the members of the EVT was acknowledged as being a successful professional educator in his/her own right with a long standing record as a capable educational leader. Each was also regarded as being likeable which enhanced their appeal to the participants who therefore found them easy to work with. The combination of the above factors enhanced the credibility of EVT members with the school community.

Participants stated that EVT members acted as a team, not as a cluster of individuals. They had developed a shared understanding of the process of CSR as a life-giving positive process and had developed an approach which emphasised shared leadership. Due to the work that the Regional Supervisors of Schools had undertaken at the school level prior to the visits, participants were at ease with the EVT even before the visit began.

The participants considered the EVT members to possess advanced interpersonal skills which were manifest in their actions. They were regarded as having skills in empathetic interviewing, in conducting supportive classroom visits, and observation. That is, they displayed empathy, understanding and compassion.

The Regional Supervisor of Schools had formed a good relationship with the leader of the IRC prior to the visit and as a consequence of this had portrayed a positive view of the process. The whole school community had been well educated about the process and consequently, and importantly, had gained personal meaning from the purpose of the process.

In summary, positive participants viewed the Regional Supervisor of Schools and other members of the EVT as being credible and were confident with the leadership and professional development that was provided. In contrast to the views expressed by the southern participants, their northern colleagues held negative views of the composition of the EVT and the role undertaken by the Regional Supervisor of Schools. They held these views for the following reasons.

Non school-based personnel (supervisors) were viewed with suspicion as being out of touch with schools. The researcher believes that this was a direct response to the lack of confidence that staff members in the northern region had in their Regional Supervisor of Schools, and that this was generalised to all supervisors - Regional, RE or Curriculum – based at the Diocesan Catholic Education Office. Other EVT members were also regarded as lacking the skills necessary for the task, including interviewing, classroom visits, report writing and a general lack of understanding of the process. Anecdotally, the researcher believes that these conclusions were made by participants due to the relationship that they perceived EVT members had with the Regional Supervisor of Schools.



Clearly the EVT's in the north did not act as a team. The Regional Supervisor of Schools was unable to articulate an understanding of the process that was congruent with the stated diocesan documents. This in turn led to the EVT not being provided with adequate leadership by the Regional Supervisor of Schools, who is the person charged with the responsibility of providing such leadership. The Regional Supervisor of Schools neither displayed leadership nor portrayed the process as positive.

Whereas the southern participants reported a good relationship between the Regional Supervisor of Schools and the leader of the IRC and others, the northern participants reported that the Regional Supervisor of Schools was viewed with disdain by most. The Regional Supervisor of Schools had a poor relationship with the principals involved which ultimately led to a lack of support for the process; if the principal is not supportive of a process, then neither will the staff be.

### **7.3.1.3 The Role of the Principal**

All of the principals involved in the study believe that they should have a substantial role in the examination phase of the CSR process because they are the leaders of the schools and because they are able to provide leadership and motivation to staff members. The two northern principals were offended at not being actively involved in the Internal Review. According to the northern Regional Supervisor of Schools, they could 'fix' the outcomes of the process as he claimed had happened in the past.

As well as their belief that as principals it is always their role to challenge and question the status quo, the principals contend that active involvement in the CSR process would add credibility to the process in the eyes of staff members who would view the process more positively if the principal was actively providing leadership. It would also enable the principals to be in a better position to motivate staff and to actively promote the process from within.

### **7.3.2 Research Question Two**

The second research question is:

#### **How does the process of Catholic School Renewal ensure quality Catholic education?**

Most participants generally felt that the process does ensure quality Catholic education, while some differed in their view. The more negative view came from a collective

perception that the process had not contributed to improved student outcomes and, as this was believed to be the purpose of a school improvement process, it had therefore failed. These participants expressed the view that the process was nothing more than a quality assurance tool that had nothing to do with ensuring quality Catholic education, but was undertaken for the benefit of Rockhampton Catholic Education.

The majority of participants expressed the view that the process does ensure quality Catholic education because it offers the opportunity for all members of the school community, including the major stakeholders (parents, caregivers and staff members), to raise and discuss issues associated with the delivery of Catholic education at the specific school.

The overarching response to this question is most certainly that CSR is the conduit for unearthing the attitudes and beliefs of members of the school community by delving into the culture of the school. CSR presents an opportunity for members of the school community to refocus and renew their consensus about the purposes and identity of the school. It is the discussions that take place during interviews and informal contact during the examination phase of CSR that elucidate whether the school is delivering quality Catholic education.

It was also acknowledged that the process ensures quality Catholic education by the very nature of it providing a report to the parents and caregivers of the children who attend the school. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to be involved at all stages of the examination phase and their involvement goes some way to ensuring quality Catholic education.

Analysis of the data gathered in response to Question Two clearly identifies that the question did not engender as strong, as emotional or as deep a response as did Question One. Participants did not see the issue of *ensuring quality Catholic education* as being as important as the focus of Question One – *growth*. That is, less importance is afforded to the process as a means of ensuring the Catholic nature of the school than to the process as a source of potential growth.

### **7.3.3 Research Question Three**

The final research question is:

**How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a useful quality assurance tool?**

There was strong support for the concept that CSR is a useful quality assurance tool. Some participants were less positive than others, but generally participants were supportive. The process has credibility with the participants, but is overwhelmingly regarded as being too stressful, too time consuming and too labour intensive.

Participants generally regard the visit by the EVT as “renewal”; i.e. the few days when the EVT is in the school, as opposed to Rockhampton Catholic Education’s view that CSR is a cyclical process that covers a five year period of time. Only one of the survey questionnaire participants (n = 68) was aware that the process is a five year cyclical process; all of the other survey questionnaire participants regarded the process as being between two days and eighteen months – the length of the EVT visit or the length of the examination phase. It appears as though participants pay little or no attention to the other four years of the renewal cycle, or are completely unaware of it, as they see the management of it as being part of the role of the leadership team at the school. This shows a substantial lack of ownership of the process of CSR in its totality by the great majority of participants. However, this contrasts with the results of the survey questionnaire question which specifically asked participants to make comment on “staff ownership of the process”. Most participants returned a positive result except for a small number who felt that it was “something we had to do”.

The purpose of the EVT visit is for EVT members to spend time at the school validating the internal report as prepared by the IRC. This happens by interviewing, visiting classrooms and observing school routines. Consequently the composition and approach of the EVT was regarded by participants as being of paramount importance.

Participants were generally content with the composition of the EVT, although there were a number of concerns expressed by some participants who felt that there should be fewer non school-based personnel (supervisors), and therefore more practitioners (school-based personnel) on the EVT. There was some suggestion that non school-based personnel are out of touch with the day to day reality of life in schools.

A theme that emerged as a major concern from participants based at one of the schools was that the process is open to the personal interpretation of the Regional Supervisor of Schools. This concern was manifest in two ways. The first was that it could result in the Regional Supervisor of Schools having a personal or professional agenda that is not consistent with the stated purpose of CSR. The second was related to a lack of consistency and outcomes

across the diocese which could result in the process looking very different at each school location. Clearly the Regional Supervisor of Schools who led the northern processes had a personal interpretation of CSR that was not consistent with the diocesan perspective. The outcome of this interpretation had dire and unfortunate consequences for schools in the region.

Evidently the leadership of the EVT by a Regional Supervisor of Schools who was regarded as being incompetent and ill informed was a theme that emerged from participants in the north. This theme was personality based as participants recognised that the particular Regional Supervisor of Schools (the role holder) was the problem in the region, not the role itself.

#### **7.4 Conclusions of the Research**

This research has made a contribution to the scholarly debate on CSR and school review processes. Some of the findings of the study replicate previous research in the areas of school review processes and the role of the Regional Supervisor of Schools and associated issues.

The following conclusions represent an attempt to better understand the perceptions of the participants about the purpose of CSR in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton. It is acknowledged that such conclusions are drawn in the understanding that participants' perceptions are not fixed, but are subject to constant change as a result of their continuing experiences of the phenomenon of CSR.

This study concludes that the process of CSR in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton is a useful quality assurance tool which helps to ensure quality Catholic education. Whether or not the process is a source of growth is dependent on a number of variables, paramount among which is the approach and ability of the Regional Supervisor of Schools to facilitate and manage the process. Although the approach of the Regional Supervisor of Schools was not deliberately focused on by the researcher when planning the research, this has proved to be the most important variable in the whole process of CSR. The literature emphasises the impact that strong leadership from school supervisors has on schools and school districts (Fullan, 2005; Marsh, 2000; Massell and Goertz, 1999; Price et al., 1995; Spillane, 1997, 1998); a finding strongly endorsed by this research.

In this study, where the Regional Supervisor of Schools was not viewed as competent or professional, nor were the individual members of the EVT nor the EVT as a group. As a consequence, the composition and approach of the EVT was questioned. Where the Regional Supervisor of Schools was not considered to be competent there were a number of consequences.

The first relates to the lack of professional development provided to staff members. The literature clearly indicates that adequate provision of professional development is necessary for the implementation of successful change processes (Elmore & Burney, 1999; McGaw, 1997; Quinn, 2000). This is supported by chaos theory which asserts that information is the lifeblood of an organisation and the source of all change and growth (Wheatley, 1992). Staff members had no ownership of the process due to their not having been provided with adequate professional development about the meaning and approach to the process. They were therefore unable to gain any personal meaning from the process – identified in the literature as necessary (Duignan, 2002; O’Murchu, 1997) - which in turn contributed to the ultimate failure of the process. The Regional Supervisor of Schools treated the process as a mechanistic one and completely missed the point of schools as organisations being living systems comprised of living people (Wheatley, 1997, 1999). This confirms the general concept of the CSR process being mechanistic in that it derives from a diocesan policy and is imposed on schools as a top down process with no local initiation. However, the documentation published by Rockhampton Catholic Education clearly states that there should be a real ownership of the process and that it should not be seen as an imposition (Davis, 1999a).

However, there is a body of literature that clearly indicates that where there is a good concept and sense of team much can be achieved (Cheng, 1996; Crowther, 1995; Crowther et al., 2001; Fullan, 2005; Limerick et al., 1998; Ogawa & Bossert, 1995; Owen, 1999; Sergiovanni, 1996; Sultmann & McLaughlin, 2000). This was supported in the research study where it was concluded that good leadership by the Regional Supervisor of Schools facilitated a good EVT, comprised of members with a common purpose and sense of team, who contributed greatly to a successful and well received process. Attributes of the successful EVTs in the study included the members being well prepared and professional in their approach, having the necessary interview and observation techniques, having a shared understanding of the process and having provided the necessary professional development opportunities for school communities prior to the process taking place. The importance of

the EVT being skilled in the areas of interviewing and observation concurs with the literature in this area (Keefe & Howard, 1997). The combination of interviewing and observation skills assisted the participants to gain the necessary personal meaning (Wheatley, 1992) from the process to assist in the successful implementation of it.

Inherent in the above is the ability of the team leader, in this case the Regional Supervisor of Schools, to provide strong leadership. Where this was not evident, nor were the attributes of a successful team.

The literature suggests that if the Regional Supervisor of Schools has a good grasp on the initiatives being implemented in the schools, they are far more likely to succeed than if this is not the case (Firestone & Fuhrman, 1998; Fullan, 2005; Marsh, 2000; Massell and Goertz, 1999; Price et al., 1995; Spillane, 1997). This is strongly supported in this study where it is evident that one of the Regional Supervisors of Schools did not have a clear concept of the diocesan approach to CSR. The consequence of this was that the schools with which this Regional Supervisor of Schools worked had negative experiences of CSR, in contrast to the other schools where the Regional Supervisors of Schools viewed the process from a diocesan perspective. The literature also points to a positive relationship between the Regional Supervisor of Schools and the principal being conducive to the successful implementation of initiatives (Fullan, 2003, 2005). This was supported in this study where the schools with right relationships between the Regional Supervisor of Schools and the principal (and others) had positive outcomes, compared with the other schools which reported the opposite.

There were some findings that were common to all schools and will provide a contribution to the scholarship. The most crucial of these was that while participants from all schools considered the process to be a useful quality assurance tool, they also considered it to be far too stressful, too time consuming and too labour intensive. Essentially, participants identified it as a useful process, but it involved an excessive amount of work. Even in the schools where the process was regarded in a positive light, the participants held these views, although most tended to agree that stress is a useful contributing factor in changing the status quo.

Interestingly, there was no evidence that the process of CSR improves outcomes for students. As this is a basic premise on which school improvement and review processes are based (Carter, 1998; Hopkins et al., 1994), the process is at odds with the literature

pertaining to teacher leadership. The process does not draw on the ability of teachers to lead and to have a major contributing role in school improvement; they are generally simply asked to fill in a questionnaire and participate in an interview. The literature informs us that authentic and self-sustaining educational change depends on the commitment, enthusiasm and motivation of those involved in the process (Fullan, 2005; Gronn, 2000), and that if change is to be effective it should involve all stakeholders at all stages – including teachers (Crowther & Olsen, 1997; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001).

The literature is unanimous in its view that the most important ingredient in any process of change is the principal (Duignan, 1997; Fullan, 2005; Sammons et al., 1997; Snowdon & Gorton, 1998). The principal provides the energy and drive needed and sets the tone. If the principal is supportive of a process, then so too are the staff. Conversely, if the principal treats the process with suspicion or disdain so do the staff (Berman & McLaughlin, 1977; Starratt, 2004). Each of the four principals involved in this study were concerned at least, and even hurt, that they are prevented from leading this major process in their schools. They all believe that it is their duty to lead such an intensive process at their schools and that they can provide positive leadership and motivation for others. Each of the four principals further expressed the view that they have the ability to motivate staff and that they are central to the successful implementation of change; these views resonate with the literature (Bolam, 1993; Fullan, 2005; Starratt, 2004).

## **7.5 Recommendations Arising Out of the Research**

As a consequence of the research the following recommendations are offered in the interests of enhancing the process of CSR in the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton.

**7.5.1** Being mindful that the Regional Supervisor of Schools is charged with the task of leading the CSR process at schools within the designated region, it is recommended that Rockhampton Catholic Education ensures that the role holder has the following attributes and knowledge:

- a. A sound knowledge and understanding of the Rockhampton diocesan approach to CSR. This will ensure that the Regional Supervisor of Schools will implement the process as it is intended and not inject personal or professional agendas that are not a part of the process. This will go some way to ensuring a diocesan-wide approach.

- b. The ability to lead a team. If the EVT is provided with strong, informed leadership, the individuals will meld into a team and will act accordingly and not as a cluster of individuals. This in turn will lead to their being viewed and accepted as credible and informed by members of the school communities that they visit.
- c. Credibility in the region as a person who has developed positive relationships with school leaders and is seen to be capable of providing leadership of the process at the school undertaking the process. The Regional Supervisor of Schools will be accepted into the schools if the role holder already has credibility and is known to staff members.

**7.5.2** That Rockhampton Catholic Education develops a resource package to be presented to school staffs by the Regional Supervisors of Schools as professional development prior to the examination phase of CSR. This will ensure that all staff members and other members of the school community are informed of the purpose and nature of the process and given the opportunity to gain personal meaning and ownership. Having a resource developed at a diocesan level will ensure that the same message is delivered in all regions of the diocese. This proposed resource package has the potential to have a major impact on the outcome of the process, as it will lead to CSR being viewed far more positively in some schools than it currently is.

**7.5.3** That a diocesan-wide approach be adopted for the preparation of EVT members to ensure that they are very informed in preparation for the task at hand. This would include:

- a. the resource package being presented to either inform the EVT members of the diocesan approach to CSR, or to reinforce their existing knowledge
- b. instruction on how to conduct successful and non-threatening interviews and on practical observation techniques.

This training will assure school communities of an acceptable level of knowledge and expertise by those embarking on the task of validating their internal review reports. It will also give the EVT members increased knowledge and confidence.



**7.5.4** That Rockhampton Catholic Education change the documentation associated with CSR in relation to the involvement of the principal. Currently it is stated that the principal should not have a leading role in the process, but that it be led by an Assistant to the Principal. Clearly this is out of step with the literature which categorically informs the reader that any change process should be led by the principal (Duignan, 1997; Fullan, 2005; Sammons et al., 1997; Snowdon & Gorton, 1998). Furthermore, as the designated leaders of schools, principals should lead the process as their leadership would have a positive impact on staff and therefore the success of the process.

**7.5.5.** That Rockhampton Catholic Education commission a diocesan wide review of the process of CSR with a view to specifically addressing the issues of:

- a. The process being viewed as a mechanical system. Clearly the intent of Rockhampton Catholic Education is that the process be a living system. This would involve a closer examination of the top down approach and an attempt to align the intent with the practice. This will involve utilising local initiation and teacher leadership concepts.
- b. The process not being seen as “ensuring quality Catholic education”, and more importantly that “quality Catholic education” is not seen as being important by participants.
- c. The perception that the process has no connection with student outcomes and achievement. There needs to be closer distinction made between the outcomes of the process and how the recommendations are implemented for the benefit of students.
- d. Stress, labour intensity and time commitment. These are the major concerns of staff in schools and are sometimes an impediment to the success of the process. It may be possible to make some minor changes to bring about some major benefits for staff and therefore the system generally.

**7.5.6** The final recommendation is that Rockhampton Catholic Education continues to use the process of CSR as it is a useful quality assurance tool which helps to ensure quality Catholic education. With the correct leadership being provided by the Regional Supervisor of Schools, the process is a source of growth.

### **7.3 Summation**

This study has added to the conceptual knowledge of school reform processes, in particular CSR in the Catholic diocese of Rockhampton. The study was undertaken with the knowledge that it explores a process that is unique to the Rockhampton diocese, but similar to processes utilised in other sectors. The use of symbolic interactionism as the favoured persuasion of interpretivism enabled the researcher to place primary importance on the social meanings people attach to the world around them, and to adopt the perspective of those being studied, not his own perspective (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Through the discipline of scholarship the process has been systematically examined and documented with some recommendations suggested.

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**APPENDIX 1**

**LETTER OF INVITATION TO POSSIBLE PARTICIPANTS**

**AND**

**PARTICIPANT CONSENT**

## **Purpose of the Study**

As part of my sabbatical following my Principal's Appraisal in June 1998 I am exploring the process of Catholic School Renewal in the Diocese of Rockhampton from the perspectives of members of the school community. The purpose of the research is to gain an understanding of how school communities view the process of Catholic School Renewal in the Diocese of Rockhampton, and therefore its usefulness as a tool in achieving its articulated aims of:

- Being "a source of potential growth" (QCEC & RCEO)
- "ensuring the quality of Catholic education: (RCEO)

The problem will be explored from the perspective's of members of some of the school communities that have undergone the *Examination Phase* of the Catholic School Renewal process in 1999, and then more specifically from the perspective's of identified groups within the schools.

Identified groups will include groups of students, staff members, parents/care providers, parish members, School Board members, Parents and Friends Association members, and any other naturally occurring or designated groups. The identification of the groups will be a consequence of issues arising from the initial interviews with members of the school communities.

### **The Rockhampton policy expands on the state policy and is entitled *Quality Assurance of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Rockhampton*:**

"As part of ensuring the quality of Catholic education, each diocesan school will engage in a process of continuous School Renewal to ensure that students have access to a quality education which is Catholic in nature and purpose. A School Development Plan to guide future growth and life is a significant feature of the Catholic School Renewal" (Rockhampton Catholic Education Office, 1995).

School renewal in the Rockhampton diocese is a response to the process of renewal which has characterised church, educational and organisational contexts during the last thirty or more years. In keeping with global church and mission structures, any agency of the church including Catholic Education needs to be committed to a process of continuous renewal. Furthermore, schools have an obligation to respond to the pressures of research in the areas of school improvement, school effectiveness and school restructuring, as well as the requirements of the diocese, parish and other educational agencies.

In the Rockhampton diocese, Diocesan authorities believe that the process of Catholic School Renewal provides a very real means for a community to re-assess its direction and demonstrate for all how its beliefs are translated into tangible outcomes for students. It is the intention that the School Mission Statement will provide a focus for reflection and discussion of the Catholic ethos and the values that operate within the school. The Mission Statement is therefore an essential element of the framework.

It is acknowledged that the process of Catholic School Renewal cannot be guaranteed of success simply by its implementation. There must be a real sense of ownership rather than a sense of imposition (Davis, 1999, p. 4) or inspection.

The Rockhampton policy expands on the Queensland policy essentially in three areas. Firstly, the process of renewal is compulsory for all diocesan schools. The second difference is that the Rockhampton policy makes no reference to the process as being *self renewing*; external teams are brought in to add their wisdom. The composition of the external team is negotiated between the school principal and the regional supervisor as the Diocesan Director's appointee. The regional supervisor leads the team, bringing with him or her, an interpretation of the process, as well as up to ten other team members. Due to the number of schools and the timing of the external visits, there is often no common element across the diocese to the school renewals. The third difference is that the formulation of a School Development Plan is mandatory for all schools (Watkins, 1996, pp. 7-8).

Schools are currently using the *Catholic School Renewal: A Quality Assurance Program for Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Rockhampton (June, 1995)* document to plan the Examination Phase of the School Renewal Program.

I thank you for accepting my invitation to discuss your perceptions of your recent experiences of Catholic School Renewal with me. I invite you to reflect on the following prior to our interview and to add any other insights you may have. This interview does not constitute research, but may be used as such at a later date.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

The three central questions that emerge for this research are:

- 1. How is the process of a Catholic School Renewal a source of potential growth?**
- 2. How does the process of Catholic School Renewal ensure quality Catholic Education?**
- 3. How is the process of Catholic School Renewal a useful quality assurance tool?**

The following is the Interview Grid which provides a schedule of questions designed to be a focus for discussion, but not intended to limit or construe feedback.

1. How has the process improved outcomes for students at the school?
2. Has the process proved to be a source of growth for the school?
3. Do you consider the process to be credible?
4. How did you find the approach and/or expertise of the External Team?
5. Has the School Renewal Report proved to be useful as a means of clarifying the needs and achievements of the school?
6. Did you feel that you had “ownership” of the process?
7. What are strengths of the process?
8. How could the process be improved?
9. Other thoughts relevant to your role at/relationship with the school.

I look forward to meeting with you early next term.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon A.C. Watkins', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Simon A.C. Watkins

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

**AN EXPLORATION OF THE PROCESS OF CATHOLIC  
SCHOOL RENEWAL IN THE DIOCESE OF ROCKHAMPTON  
FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF STAFF MEMBERS**

***The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information from school staff members with regard to their perceptions of Catholic School Renewal as they have recently experienced it.***

***As it is my intention to present a report and some practical suggestions to the Catholic Education Office on completion of this project, I ask that you respond to the questions candidly. I would be grateful if you did not collaborate with your peers when completing the questionnaire.***

***The information received will be treated confidentially and neither individuals nor schools will be identified.***

Please supply the following information for statistical purposes?

**Please circle the appropriate response:**

1. Gender:            Male                            Female
2. Role:              Teacher                            Other staff
3. Age:                20 – 30            31 – 40            41 – 50            51 – 60            60+



*“As part of ensuring the quality of Catholic education, each Diocesan school will engage in a process of continuous School Renewal to ensure students have access to a quality education which is Catholic in nature and purpose. A school development plan to guide future growth and life is a significant feature of the Catholic School renewal” (Davis, 1998, p.ii)*

**Please respond to the following statements:**

1. It is claimed that Catholic School Renewal is an ongoing and continuous cycle over a four or five year period of time. To what extent has this been your experience?

Little or none		Some elements		True
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

Optional comment \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

2. To what extent has it been your experience that the School Renewal Process assures parents that their children have access to quality Catholic Education?

Little or none		To some degree		Completely
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

Optional comment \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

3. In your opinion how much ownership did the staff of your school have of the most recent Catholic School Renewal process?

Little or none		Some ownership		Complete ownership
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

Optional Comment \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

4. It is claimed that the Catholic School Renewal process is a source of growth. In your experience how effective has the process been as a source of growth:

*Spiritually:*

Little or none	Quite effective	Effective	Very effective	Excellent
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

Optional comment \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Personally:**

<b>Little or none</b>	<b>Quite effective</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Very effective</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

Optional comment \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Professionally:**

<b>Little or none</b>	<b>Quite effective</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Very effective</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

Optional comment \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Drawing on your personal experience of Catholic School Renewal to what extent do you believe the process to be credible?

<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little</b>	<b>To some degree</b>	<b>Quite</b>	<b>Fully</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

Optional comment \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Please comment on the following with regard to the effect that the recent *examination phase* of the Catholic School Renewal process at your school had.

**Stress levels:**

<b>Far too high</b>	<b>Too high</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Too low</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

Optional comment \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

***Time commitment:***

<b>Far too much</b>	<b>Too much</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Not enough</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

Optional comment \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

***Labour intensity:***

<b>Far too much</b>	<b>Too much</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Not enough</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

Optional comment \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. In your opinion, how long did the *examination phase* of the recent Catholic School Renewal process at your school last? \_\_\_\_\_**

Optional comment \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**8. Are there any other comments or suggestions that you would like to make?  
(Should you require more writing space, please feel free to add your own pages)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX 4**

**POLICY:  
QUALITY ASSURANCE OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS  
IN THE  
DIOCESE OF ROCKHAMPTON**

DIOCESAN EDUCATION COUNCIL  
DIOCESE OF ROCKHAMPTON

Year Adopted: 2004

Policy No: 2004/04

**POLICY AREA**

**QUALITY ASSURANCE OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN  
THE DIOCESE OF ROCKHAMPTON**

**PREAMBLE**

Catholic Schools should continually review their mission and vision and regularly examine its practices to ensure the school strives to be aligned with Church renewal and is responsive to change and promoting a culture of community, learning and school leadership.

**RATIONALE**

Schools are constantly challenge to reflect and review so they can give an account of their mission to the communities they serve. They will be constantly challenged by external, pedagogical and community demands and should have well developed plans which are responsive to pressures but do not compromise the immediate needs, aspirations and mission of the school community/

**VALUES**

Respect, Dignity, Justice, Truth, Accountability, Responsibility, Faith, Learning, Excellence.

**POLICY**

As part of ensuring the quality of Catholic education, each Diocesan school will engage in a process of continuous School Renewal to ensure students have access to a quality education which is Catholic in nature and purpose. A school development plan to guide future growth and life is a significant feature of the Catholic School Renewal.

**IMPLEMENTATION  
ISSUES**

1. The Rockhampton Diocesan School Renewal program is developed as an ongoing continuous process while addressing:

\* The reflection by the Catholic School Community on the mission, nature and purpose of the specific Catholic School;

- \* The clarification of school needs and achievements into a School Renewal Report;
- \* The outlining of a School Development Plan from the School Renewal Report;
- \* The implementation of the School Development Plan.

<p>IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES (CONT'D)</p>
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2. The School Renewal program is owned by the school community - students, staff, parents, priest, parish, and the wider community.
3. The process of School Renewal is the joint responsibility of the Director of Catholic Education and the Principal of each Catholic School.
4. The School Board contributes to the School Renewal process and the development of policies detailed in the School Development Plan.
5. Through the School Renewal process, parents are assured their children have access to quality Catholic education.
6. It is the responsibility of the Director of Catholic Education to ensure all staff understand the purpose and nature of the School Renewal Process.
7. The School Renewal program involves the appointment of an internal review team by the Principal to evaluate the school's cultural characteristics including Community of faith, Religious Education, Curriculum Outcomes, Parental & Community Involvement, Leadership, Relationships, Organization and Administration as well as accreditation requirements, and an external review team appointed by the Director to validate this evaluation.
8. The Assistant to the Director Schools of each region is responsible for coordinating the external review team
9. A yearly review of achievements is carried out according to the School Development Plan.

10. Staff are provided with information and training in relation to a School Development Plan.
11. Education is provided to school communities on what is meant by 'quality assurance.'
12. The School Renewal program is addressed during the induction process for school leaders.

<b>REFLECTION MATERIAL</b>
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The Catholic School, Rome, 1977

Qld. Policy "Self Renewing Catholic Schools in Queensland"

"The Effectiveness of Catholic Schools" - Marcellin Flynn, FMS, 1985

"The Culture of Catholic Schools" - Marcellin Flynn, FMS, 1993.

Quality Assurance documents

*Approved by the Diocesan Education Council on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2004*

## **APPENDIX 5**

### **DETAILS OF INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS**



<b>Name</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Position held</b>
Zeta	Female	31 – 40	St Kevin's	Rockhampton	Non Teaching
Alan	Male	31 – 40	St Kevin's	Rockhampton	Class Teacher
Betty	Female	31 – 40	St Kevin's	Rockhampton	Non Teaching
Carmel	Female	20 – 30	St Kevin's	Rockhampton	Non Teaching
Donna	Female	31 – 40	St Kevin's	Rockhampton	Principal
Evelyn	Female	51+	St Kevin's	Rockhampton	Class Teacher
Fred	Male	31 – 40	St Kevin's	Rockhampton	SCO
Genevieve	Female	51+	St Michael's	Southern	Non Teaching
Bertha	Female	20 – 30	St Michael's	Southern	Non Teaching
Harry	Male	31 – 40	St Michael's	Southern	Principal
Irene	Female	51+	St Michael's	Southern	Class Teacher
Joanne	Female	41 – 50	St Michael's	Southern	Class Teacher
Katie	Female	20 – 30	St Michael's	Southern	Non Teaching
Lorraine	Female	51+	St Michael's	Southern	Class Teacher
Mary	Female	41 – 50	St Michael's	Southern	P.E. Teacher
Nathan	Male	41 – 50	St Michael's	Southern	APRE
Ophelia	Female	20 – 30	St Michael's	Southern	SCO
Pamela	Female	31 – 40	St Michael's	Southern	P/T Teacher
Rosa	Female	51+	St Mary's	Northern	Non Teaching
Quentin	Male	41 – 50	St Mary's	Northern	Principal
Stella	Female	31 – 40	St Mary's	Northern	APRE
Tara	Female	31 – 40	St Mary's	Northern	Class Teacher
Ursula	Female	31 – 40	St Mary's	Northern	LST
Violet	Female	20 – 30	St Mary's	Northern	SCO
Aileen	Female	41 – 50	St Finbar's	Northern	Class Teacher
Bertha	Female	20 – 30	St Finbar's	Northern	Class Teacher
Cathy	Female	31 - 40	St Finbar's	Northern	SCO
Dominic	Male	41 – 50	St Finbar's	Northern	Principal

## **APPENDIX 6**

### **DETAILS OF SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE PARTICIPANTS**

<b>Id</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Position held</b>
01	Female	41 – 50	St Mary’s	Northern	Non Teacher
02	Female	51+	St Mary’s	Northern	Non Teacher
03	Female	31 – 40	St Mary’s	Northern	Non Teacher
04	Female	31 – 40	St Mary’s	Northern	Non Teacher
05	Female	41 – 50	St Mary’s	Northern	Non Teacher
06	Female	31 – 40	St Mary’s	Northern	Non Teacher
07	Female	31 – 40	St Mary’s	Northern	Non Teacher
08	Female	20 – 30	St Mary’s	Northern	SCO
09	Female	20 – 30	St Mary’s	Northern	Teacher
10	Female	41 – 50	St Mary’s	Northern	Teacher
11	Female	20 – 30	St Mary’s	Northern	Teacher
12	Female	20 – 30	St Mary’s	Northern	Teacher
13	Female	31 – 40	St Mary’s	Northern	Principal
14	Female	31 – 40	St Mary’s	Northern	Teacher
15	Female	20 – 30	St Mary’s	Northern	Teacher
16	Female	31 – 40	St Mary’s	Northern	APRE
17	Female	31 – 40	St Mary’s	Northern	Teacher
18	Female	41 – 50	St Finbar’s	Northern	Non Teacher
19	Female	41 – 50	St Finbar’s	Northern	Non Teacher
20	Female	41 – 50	St Finbar’s	Northern	Non Teacher
21	Female	31 – 40	St Finbar’s	Northern	Non Teacher
22	Female	41 – 50	St Finbar’s	Northern	Non Teacher
23	Female	31 - 40	St Finbar’s	Northern	Non Teacher
24	Female	31 – 40	St Finbar’s	Northern	Non Teacher
25	Female	31 – 40	St Finbar’s	Northern	Non Teacher
26	Female	41 - 50	St Finbar’s	Northern	Non Teacher
27	Male	41 - 50	St Finbar’s	Northern	Principal
28	Male	41 - 50	St Finbar’s	Northern	Teacher
29	Female	41 - 50	St Finbar’s	Northern	Teacher
30	Female	51+	St Finbar’s	Northern	SCO
31	Female	31 - 40	St Finbar’s	Northern	Teacher
32	Female	31 – 40	St Finbar’s	Northern	Teacher

33	Female	20 – 30	St Finbar’s	Northern	Teacher
34	Female	20 – 30	St Finbar’s	Northern	Teacher
35	Female	41 – 50	St Finbar’s	Northern	Teacher
36	Male	20 – 30	St Finbar’s	Northern	Teacher
37	Female	31 – 40	St Finbar’s	Northern	Teacher
38	Female	20 – 30	St Finbar’s	Northern	Teacher
39	Female	41 – 50	St Finbar’s	Northern	Teacher
40	Female	31 – 40	St Finbar’s	Northern	Teacher
41	Female	41 – 50	St Finbar’s	Northern	Teacher
42	Female	20 – 30	St Finbar’s	Northern	Teacher
43	Female	41 – 50	St Finbar’s	Northern	Teacher
44	Female	20 – 30	St Finbar’s	Northern	Teacher
45	Female	31 – 40	St Kevin’s	Rockhampton	Non Teacher
46	Female	41 – 50	St Kevin’s	Rockhampton	Non Teacher
47	Female	31 – 40	St Kevin’s	Rockhampton	Non Teacher
48	Female	41 – 50	St Kevin’s	Rockhampton	Non Teacher
49	Female	31 – 40	St Kevin’s	Rockhampton	Non Teacher
50	Female	20 – 30	St Kevin’s	Rockhampton	Teacher
51	Female	20 – 30	St Kevin’s	Rockhampton	Teacher
52	Female	41 – 50	St Kevin’s	Rockhampton	Teacher
53	Female	31 – 40	St Kevin’s	Rockhampton	Teacher
54	Male	31 – 40	St Kevin’s	Rockhampton	Teacher
55	Female	20 – 30	St Kevin’s	Rockhampton	Teacher
56	Female	31 – 40	St Kevin’s	Rockhampton	Principal
57	Female	41 – 50	St Kevin’s	Rockhampton	Teacher
58	Female	31 – 40	St Michael’s	Southern	Teacher
59	Female	51+	St Michael’s	Southern	Teacher
60	Female	41 – 50	St Michael’s	Southern	Teacher
61	Male	41 – 50	St Michael’s	Southern	APRE
62	Female	31 – 40	St Michael’s	Southern	SCO
63	Female	20 – 30	St Michael’s	Southern	Non Teacher
64	Female	41 – 50	St Michael’s	Southern	Non Teacher
65	Female	41 – 50	St Michael’s	Southern	Non Teacher
66	Female	31 – 40	St Michael’s	Southern	Non Teacher

67	Female	51+	St Michael's	Southern	Teacher
68	Male	31 - 40	St Michael's	Southern	Principal

**APPENDIX 7**

**APPROVAL FROM THE DIOCESAN DIRECTOR OF CATHOLIC  
EDUCATION TO CONTACT PRINCIPALS**



# Catholic Education Office

Diocese of Rockhampton

March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2001

Mr Simon Watkins  
Supervisor of Catholic Schools  
Diocesan Catholic Education Office  
PO Box 524  
ROCKHAMPTON QLD 4700

Dear Simon

**Re: Approval to Contact Principals re Research Study**

Thank you for your request for approval to contact Principals of Primary Schools in the Diocese of Rockhampton seeking their assistance with your research as part of your doctoral studies.

I am happy to grant permission for you to conduct your Research Project with schools in the Diocese of Rockhampton, on the understanding that this approval is given if the Principals of the respective schools are agreeable to be part of the research.

Congratulations on your initiative and good luck with the project,

Yours sincerely

J J McCorley  
**DIOCESAN DIRECTOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION**

(For and on behalf of the Roman Catholic Trust Corporation  
for the Diocese of Rockhampton)